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The poetical works of Mrs. Horace Dobell



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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
MRS. HORACE DOBELL.

PLATE I.



Mrs. Horace Dobell æt. 37.
From a portrait by J. Archer, 1865.

[See p. 22.]

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
MRS. HORACE DOBELL.
WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

ILLUSTRATED.

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MRS. HORACE DOBELL AT HOME:

A LIFE SKETCH.

“Neither from gloomy vault nor marbled urn,
* * * * *

Can we dare pray our lost ones to return

To life's wild tumult or to grief's unrest.”

The Graves of Three Brothers.

BY MRS. HORACE DOBELL.

ILLUSTRATED BY

**Selections from her Works, Portraits,
and other Plates.**

INTRODUCTORY NOTE,

1908.

THE greater part of this Sketch was written at the request of the Editor of "*The Biographical Magazine*" in 1887, but Mrs. Dobell objected to any biography being published during her lifetime, and it was therefore put aside. The story has now been brought up to date.

*List of her Works at present published or printed privately,
with dates:—*

"Eveline," printed privately and anonymously, 1852.

"Ethelstone," printed privately and anonymously, 1854.

"Life Behind Her Screens; or, Lifted Veils." Published by Wertheimer & Co., 1880.

"*Versus A Woman Pro Women*"; "A Man's Thoughts about Men"; and other Articles. Wertheimer, 1880.

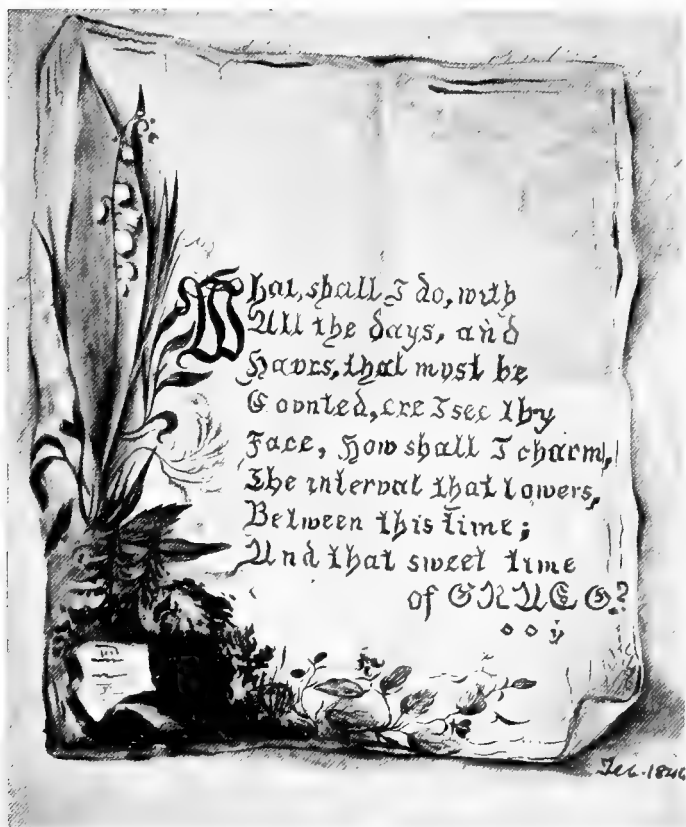
"Ethelstone, Eveline, and other Poems." "Legends of the Castle and Tales of the Village" (Collected Poems). Kegan Paul & Co., 1881.

"Dark Pages; or, the Secrets of an Old Bureau." Three vols., 1882. Remington & Co.

"In the Watches of the Night." Eighteen vols. Vol. I. 1884—Vol. XVIII. 1888. Containing over sixteen hundred separate poems. Remington & Co.

All the works are now out of print, and the authoress has left in manuscript a second and third series of "In the Watches of the Night," sufficient to form twenty-six volumes corresponding to the eighteen volumes already published.

PLATE II.



Photograph of an Illuminated Manuscript of a poem by
 Fanny Kemble, dated London, February 28th, 1846.

[See p. 12,



"HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED SLEEP!"

From a Pencil Sketch of Mrs. Horace Dobell, 1851, act. 23, by her Husband.

[See p. 19.]



Mrs. Horace Dobell æt. 26.
From a Photograph taken in 1854.



Sandon Village. The Sexton's Cottage on the right, the "Six Bells" Inn on the left.

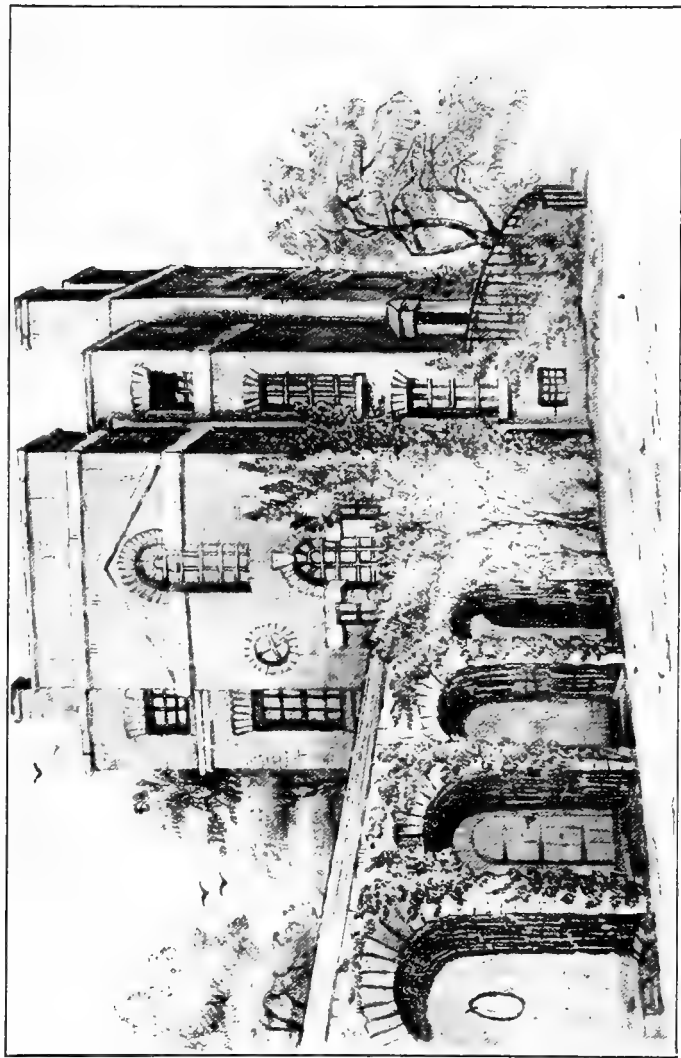
From a Pencil Sketch by MRS. HORACE DOBELL before her Marriage.



Sandon Church and Sexton's Cottage, showing the end of the old Manor House, "Sandon Bury," with Outbuildings. The Poetess's Old Bedroom Window is on the right margin.

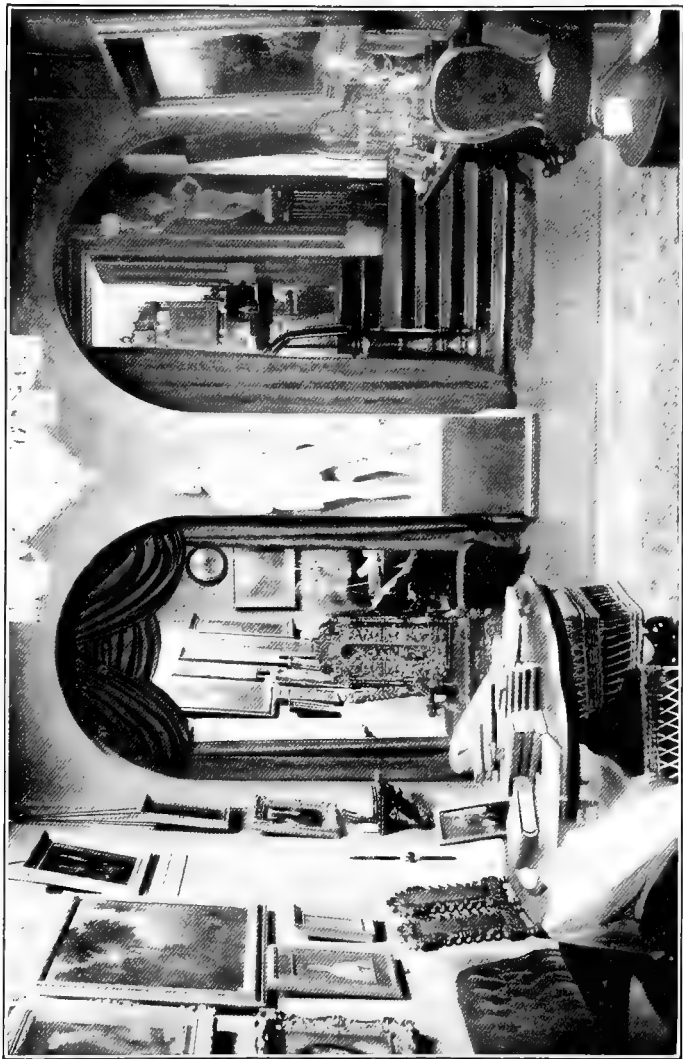
[See p. 4.

From a Water-Colour Sketch by Dr. HORACE DOBELL.

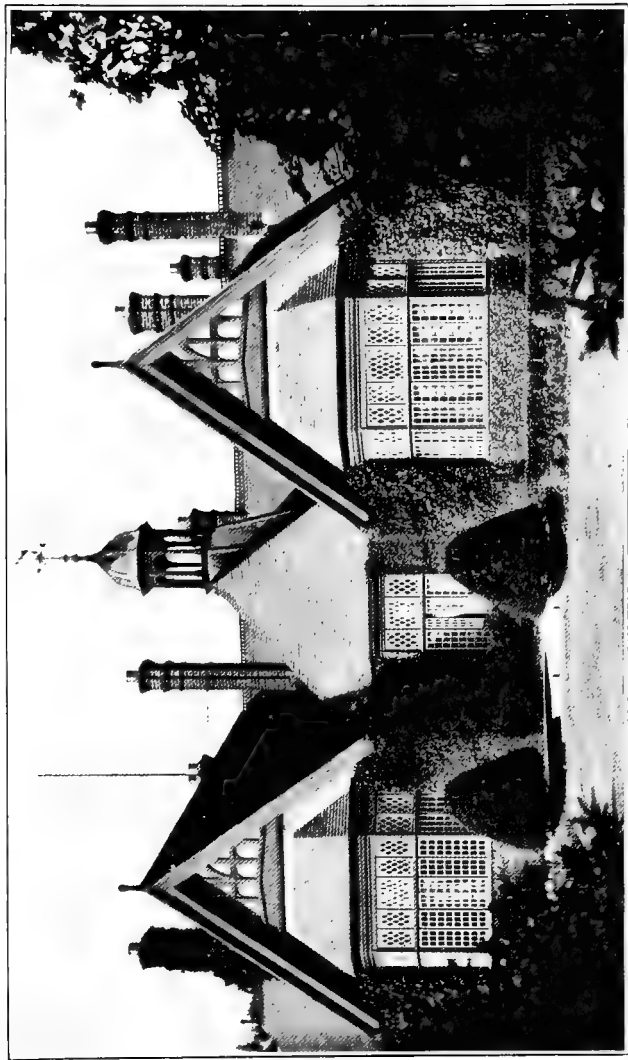


The back of Olsey House, with Piazza leading to the great Kitchen.

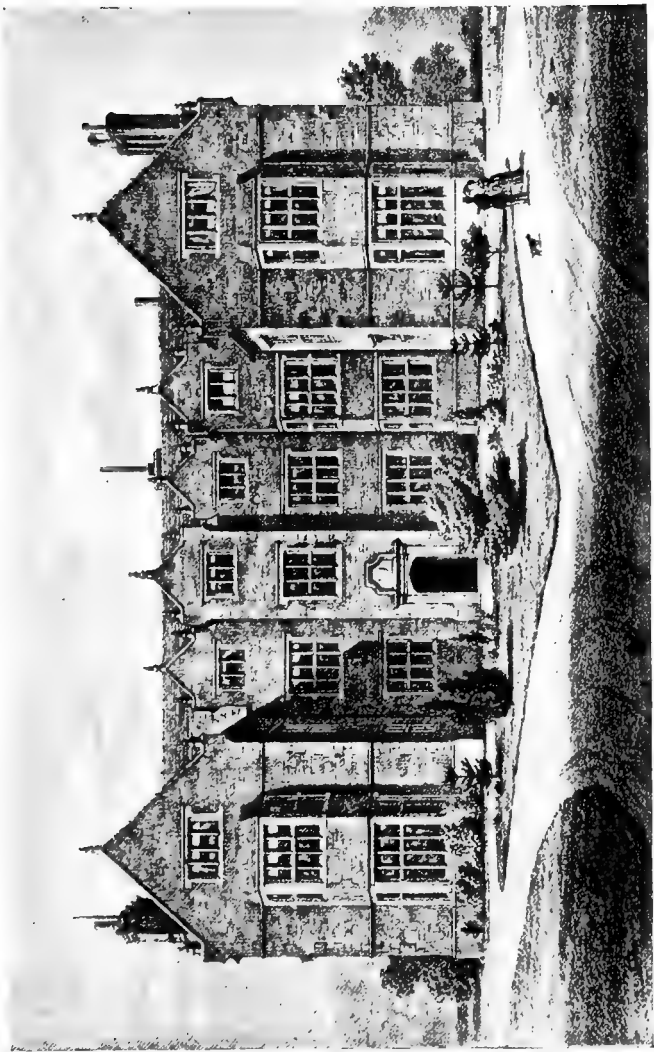
[See p. 7.
From a Pencil Sketch by Mrs. HORACE DOBELL before her Marriage.



One end of the Picture Gallery at Strete Place, Bournemouth. [See p 52.
From a Photograph.

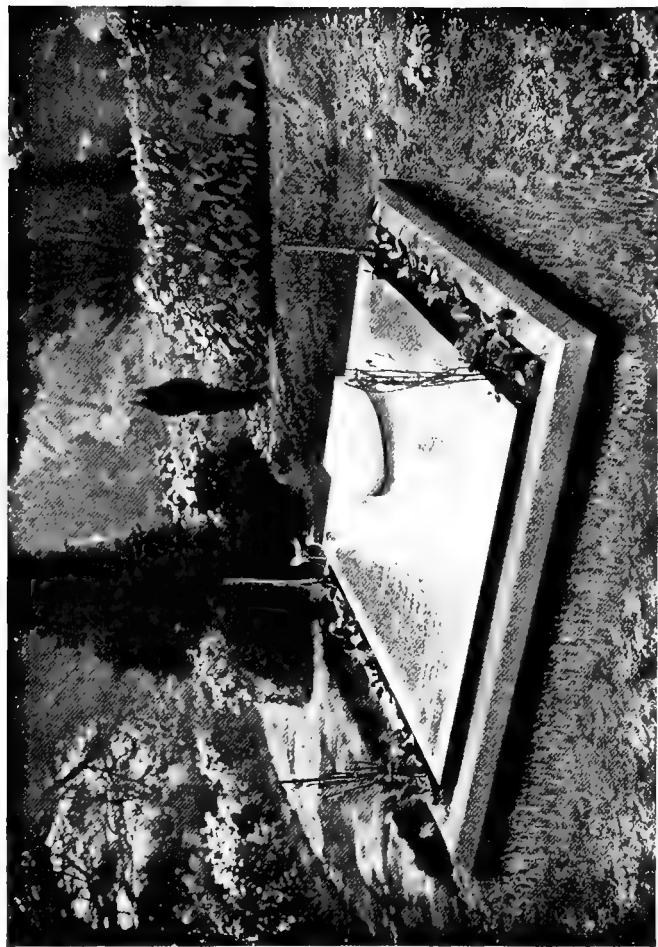


Lawn Front of "Parkstone Heights," Dorset. (Separated by a Raised Walk 20 ft. wide, and a Dwarf Hedge, from a Lawn 70 ft. wide and 170 ft. long.) [See p. 63.]



“Strete Manor and Strete Place, the Ancient Mansion of the Dobells, after passing through the families of Say, Piennes, and Goring, was transferred by Sir George Fleetwood to Walter Dobell, October 10th, 1607, and he held his first Manorial Court, November 6th, 1607.”—BURRELL MS., p. 422, 1684.

From an old lithograph of “Strete Place,” NASSAUX.



Tomb of Mrs. Horace Dobell in Parkstone Cemetery.

[See p. 67.

For description and inscription see next page.

Plate XI.—The Tomb in Parkstone Cemetery covering two graves. A slab of polished red Peterhead granite and an escutcheon of white marble, bearing the combined arms of Dobell and Fordham, with the motto "*Without help from above the arrow flies in vain,*" the whole enclosed in a coping of the same granite. The leaded inscription on the granite slab is:—

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF

Dr. HORACE BENGE DOBELL, Born January 1st, 1828; Died —————

AND OF HIS WIFE, WHO PREDECEASED HIM,

ELIZABETH MARY DOBELL, Born March 8th, 1828; Died August 1st, 1908.

"We believe in one God, the First and the Last, the Creator of all things. In Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, and in a Life Everlasting. Our hopes in a Future Life are based upon the character we may have formed while on earth."

Inside the granite coping are planted, at the head, two acacias, raised by Mrs. Dobell from suckers of her favourite tree; at the foot, two monthly roses from her garden; and along the sides the evergreen *Gaultheria Schallen* from the grounds of Parkstone Heights, and other plants. See p. 67.

MRS. HORACE DOBELL AT HOME.

Born March 8th, 1828; Died August 1st, 1908.

WHATEVER may be the exact precedence eventually assigned to Mrs. Horace Dobell by the Heralds of Poetry, her history leaves no room for doubt that she possessed the first essential title to a good place on their roll, viz., that she was born a poet.

The first strong impulses of her intellectual life were poetic, and, after about seventy years of active work, they were poetic still.

She began to write verses and romances before she could correctly spell the words, and in her earliest girlhood crammed every scrap of paper she could obtain, back and front, with her compositions and notes, many of them, in the hurry and press of the impulse, being scribbled on the margins of old bits of newspapers. They were in all styles of verse and subject, from lyrics, odes and philosophic musings, to lengthy reveries and legendary ballads. But wildness, romance, and contemplation were generally the leading characteristics.

Amongst "scraps written between the ages of ten and sixteen," one of the earliest preserved is "A Moorish Burial Chant," beginning

We lay her in her last still home, the dark and dreary grave,
Though she is fairer than the flowers that o'er her sadly wave.

Another is "A Question"—

Hast thou forgotten that green, shady slope, Where once we sat and talked of love, alone; When thy soft eyes were full of light and hope,	And mine were almost joyous as thine own? Hast thou forgotten that dark, spread- ing tree, Beneath whose shade I told fond tales to thee?
--	--

Mrs. Horace Dobell was the third daughter of Mr. G. G. Fordham, of Odsey House, Cambs., a very long-lived family. Her great uncle, referred to on p. 6, died in 1847, in his 98th year, and her cousin, Mr. Frederick Nash Fordham, who was born nineteen years before she was, did not die till 1905. A Royston paper says: "Mr. Frederick Nash Fordham, the banker, who has died in his ninety-sixth year, was a member of an old family associated with the neighbourhood as landowners for centuries, and connected with the public life of the town and district as bankers for the last hundred years."

The *Times*, Jan. 29th, 1894, says: "Mr. Henry Fordham, the head of a well-known local Bank, died at Royston on Saturday, having nearly completed his 91st year. He was the son of Mr. John George Fordham, who lived till nearly 95."

Somewhere about this period was written "Fragments of a Legend," consisting of an introduction and three cantos, written in the ballad style, thus—

Music was heard and wine was poured	And jewels flashed in raven hair,
That night at Hugh O'Neil's proud	For young and graceful forms were
board;	there;
His lofty halls rang back again	Yet still the Chief looked sternly on,
With laughter and with minstrel's strain.	With brow and lips stern-set and wan.

And another legend, called "Wolfe the Avenger," is in a similar style, thus—

Soon not a voice and scarce a breath	That grew in volume and in power
Disturbed the gloomy field of death;	With the slow deepening of the hour.
Not even the vulture's savage croak	"Rejoice! Rejoice! ye shadowy dead,
Through the dull, heavy vapours broke.	Lift each of ye a ghastly head;
Until, on that grim battle plain	Raise each of ye a blood-stained hand;
Was heard to pass a plaintive strain,	Rise up—a strong, if phantom, band."

In a totally different style we find, at about the same period, *L'histoire se répète*—

The little stream that rises from the	Gloomy with tempests, sparkling in
hill	the sun;
Swells to a mighty river at its base,	Nature and ages differ but in name,
Bearing broad ships upon its bosom;	The next will finish what was last
still	begun;
We see the same marked features on	E'en Nature's face scarce shows a
its face.	wrinkle more,
A thousand years—the world is still the	Though kingdoms change and cen-
same:	turies roll o'er.

One of the most perfect of her earlier poems that has been published is a "Dirge of the Red Indian Warrior"—

Go to thy rest!	Not where the stream
Not where the tall and calm magnolias	Beneath the arching wild-vine whispers
bow	low,
Slowly and solemnly each snowy	With spirit voices, when the sun's
crest;	last beam
Beneath the violet grass we lay thee	Falls where it bathes thy warrior's
now.	dust, we go!
Not where the pine	To thy dark bed
With dreary sighing echoed back thy	We would not that sad music's wail
tread	should come,
When forest-dwellers made beneath	Nor see men bow the plumed and
its shrine	glittering head
The ancient sleeping-places of their	In stately march to the deep-sounding
dead.	drum.

They mock us well !
With drooping banners and the hollow
sound

Long pealing from the battlements,
to tell
That thou, our brave, at last hast
ransom found.

We do not weep ;
Thy brothers have no tears to shed
for thee ;
Smiling we gaze upon the dreamless
sleep,
The fetters broken and the captive free !

“An Appeal to France,” written one evening in 1848, on hearing the rumour, happily false, of a fresh revolution in France. This spirited poem was written at the age of twenty, and may further illustrate the poet’s variety of style in her early life—

I would not seek to argue with thee,
France !
The sophist’s triumph never lit my
brow ;
And if it had, but small would be
the chance,
’Gainst one renowned for subtlety
as thou.
But to thy feelings, to thy heart I
would
Appeal, even in thy present angry
mood ;
For thou hast much within thee true
and good,
Mixed with the recklessness of thy
half-southern blood.
I would not argue of decree, or
law,
But to thy sad experience appeal :
Thy right to right thyself dispute
not, nor
Bid thee for monarchs more
respect to feel.
For there may be oppression we
know not,
I would not bid thee tamely to
submit ;
Thou may’st *mean* well, but hast
thou, then, forgot
Thou can’st not quench at will a flame
so madly lit ?

Hither we bring,
Ere yet the earth on thy cold brow we
lay,
Thy boy ! for one wild moment here
to cling,
In love’s first sorrow, to thy lips of clay.
Bend low and near,
Nor sigh, nor moan must break our
chief’s repose ;
Yet—boy—in thy young heart be
written here
A deep and burning memory of his
foes !

Hast thou no other method of
redress
Than that fierce weapon now up-
raised by thee ?
Must, then, the cry of terror and
distress
Follow the steps that seek for
Liberty ?
Alas ! in these “enlightened” times,
must still
The trumpet’s clang sound o’er
the startled earth ?
Thy daughters’ eyes with tears of
anguish fill,
From fear to what dark woes its echoes
may give birth.
Yes ! “Mourir pour la patrie !” be
thy cry ;
Yes ! battle—but against a foreign
foe ;
Lift not thy warlike arm so madly
high,
Against *thyself* must now rebound
that blow.
Go forth into the battle if thou wilt,
Thou hast brought out thy sword
—gird on that sword !
But not by thee thy brother’s blood
be spilt,
Or dare not let *thy country* be the
rousing word.

I would remind thee of a time gone
by,
When a dark curse had fallen on
thy land,
And nations looked upon thee with
a sigh,
Or pointed at thee with deriding
hand.
I would recall to thee a fatal tale,
By gory fingers on thy annals
traced,
I would recall to thee a long, sad
wail
That rang, then, shuddering, o'er thy
country's ghastly waste.

Forget it not! that cry so madly
wild
Against thee unto God in judg-
ment rose;
Forget it not! thy hearth was then
defiled
By all the crimes that man's dark
bosom knows.
Remember! if, as in that hellish
time,
Thou did'st pretend oppression's
bonds to free,
Yet loosened but the chains of rage
and crime;
Great was thy punishment, and great
again shall be!

Specimens of many other styles and subjects will appear as we go on, but these must suffice for the present, while we proceed with our narrative.

The sixth of a family of five sons and four daughters, born on March 8th, 1828, in an old Hertfordshire Manor House* (Plate VI.) adjoining the ancient church of a rural village about five miles from the nearest little country town, surrounded by large farmsteads, and nearly all the country houses for miles round occupied by members of her father's family, Mrs. Dobell began life with a merry childhood, joining heartily with her brothers in their country pursuits. She often amused children by recounting feats of childish daring, such as walking along the ridges of immense barns, wandering over marsh grounds on high stilts, helping her brothers to build wooden houses among the branches of the great trees, and galloping over the hedges and ditches of the Hertfordshire heaths, on ponies or horses, of which there was always a good supply in the Manor stables. These exploits were varied by nutting excursions and flower, butterfly, and birds'-nest hunting in the surrounding woods, or in following the sportsmen through turnip fields laden with early dew or hoar frost.

It was well that she had tasted of such childish delights, for her young life was soon to be clouded with many melancholy episodes, the influence of which is to be traced in her poems.

In her early girlhood she developed strong tastes for music and drawing, making paintings of all the wild flowers of the districts, and sketches of everything—sketchable and unsketchable—within reach of her

* Many descriptions of the old houses and neighbouring country are given by the poetess in "Life Behind Her Screens," "Dark Pages," and elsewhere, and a pencil drawing of the old inn nearly opposite the church and manor house is here copied. (See Plate V.)

home; especially selecting moonlight, and grim drawings of that old village church and churchyard that could be seen from her little bedroom window. (See Plate.)

Music she learnt as best she could from her sisters, who had taken lessons at a country school, but chiefly through her own exertions; for there were no teachers to be had without going to Cambridge, to which there was no coach from the village. Somehow or other she mastered it, both vocally and instrumentally, up to a point—vocal music afterwards developed into a passion. By chance, when staying with some friends at a country town, she learnt that the then celebrated Mrs. Alban Croft (an Italian professor of singing) was teaching in the neighbourhood, and she seized the opportunity to take “six lessons” out of her pocket money. Mrs. Alban Croft discovered that she had a voice of the purest soprano type, and took great interest in her pupil; but the time of the visit was too short to allow the teacher to do more than set her pupil on the first step of what afterwards developed into a marvellous capacity. It was after her marriage and removal to London, under the teaching of Miss Helen Cundell (Madame Greiffenhagen), who had lately come to London and married, after acting as *prima donna* at some Continental opera houses, that Mrs. Dobell became distinguished, in *private* London society for the loveliness and great capacity of her voice and for the skill and sweetness with which she used it; especially was it noted for its almost interminable “breath” and equality of vocalisation in the longest and most difficult “shakes,” such as that in the “Ah! vous dirai-je?”* set by Adolph Adam, which was one of her favourites. In the large and brilliant medical and scientific conversaciones and soirées, for which her husband’s house in Harley Street became famous, one of the greatest attractions was usually an “amateur concert,” in which Mrs. Dobell took the most difficult soprano parts. Some old programmes of these entertainments lie before us, and indicate the extent of her powers. These musical talents were, to a certain extent, inherited by her eldest daughter, who, at an early age, joined in the instrumental parts of these concerts with much éclat.

But to return to the life before marriage. The old Manor House possessed a numerous and well-selected library of standard books, and these were devoured with avidity by the young girl—heavy and light, nothing came amiss. Rollin, Gibbon, Russell, Scott, Ossian, Scientific Dialogues—a special favourite—Pope, Dryden, Milton, Bunyan, Defoe, Edgeworth, Porter, etc., etc., and the circulating library at the county town was called upon for everything it could supply. French, German,

* This shake accompanies the air through sixteen bars, ending with an octave run and a prolonged note on upper B natural and the first intake of breath must serve the singer to the end.

and Italian were studied without masters, and worked at with characteristic determination, assisted by an unusually clear and quick memory, until Madame de Stäel, Chateaubriand, Sevigné, Schiller, Goethe, Tasso, etc., etc., could be enjoyed in their native languages. To all this was added a craving for religious and theological studies, and many controversial essays were written on these subjects, some of which appeared in the pages of a religious "Manuscript Magazine," which was at that time in vogue.

But the poetry went on through all, constituting the dearest veins, for the working of which time was always found, by night or by day. Many verses were published from time to time in the columns of the county paper, the "*Mark Lane Express*"; and this led to an odd episode—a romantic poetical correspondence commenced and was carried on in the paper between a young lady living with her parents in the vortex of fashionable London society and the poetess of the old Manor House, who, at that time, had scarcely seen the Great City. Many congenial themes were found, and a friendship sprang up between the two girls, which continued up to the time when both had long been married and had grandchildren.

Threatenings of a great cloud were gathering over the young poetess's home at about this period of her life. Her paternal grandfather and his brother had entered upon a Chancery suit to settle a long-standing dispute as to the succession of some important estates, long held by her grandfather, some of which were occupied by her father. He was the third son, and a special favourite with his father, who brought him into this suit; while the first son, who was a favourite and chief beneficiary of the antagonistic uncle, was brought by him into his suit. This uncle, the great-uncle of the poetess, who lived to nearly one hundred, was the one described by her in the comic "Impromptu Lines on My Uncle"—

I had an uncle in former days,
A gentleman known for eccentric
ways;
A grey old banker, and one, it seems,
With all the money that "banking"
means.
But he lived in an unpretending street,
In a shabby house, for extremes *will*
meet,
With a shabby carriage and servants
as bad;
All called him stingy—none called him
mad.
I dined with him once, and I thought
to eat
A dinner of soup, of fish, of meat,

Some pudding to follow, perhaps,
beside,
Some fruit from a garden that seemed
his pride,
So full of cherries and green young
peas;
Alas! for me, we had none of these.
But you'll not believe it, you hardly
can,
Unless you had known the sort of
man—
The miserly rich! This dinner was not
Of fish, flesh, or fowl, or even hot,
But only a joint of fat, salt pig!
'Twas a cheek, I think, it was rather
big

For only two ; as for pudding, or spice,
Or custard, ah ! me ; there was nothing
so nice.

" Mine uncle " quitted the world one
day,

One winter's morn, in the oddest way ;
His men were clearing a muddy pond,
Once used for fish in the field
beyond ;

And the work was hard, or the men
were idle,

And he, who couldn't his temper bridle,
At once declared, with an angry shout,
They didn't know what they were
about,

And *he* would show them the way to
do it ;

And so he did, but he lived to rue it,
Or, rather, died from the lesson
taught,

So fatal the chill that the teacher
caught.

The family war thus begun between the two brothers of one generation and the two brothers of the next generation, was doomed, as it proved, to be fought out to the death. No doubt of *success* had been permitted on the part of the possessors and their lawyers, when the grandfather died in the heat of the battle, bequeathing to his youngest son—the poetess's father—a solemn charge to continue the struggle.

Now the clouds began to thicken faster and faster ; the expenses of the suit poured in, hostile feelings between the two branches of the family became more intense, as the possibility of conquest brightened on the one side, and the horrors of defeat dawned upon the minds of the possessors. Ghosts of possible poverty stalked about at night utterly absorbing the family thoughts, and casting a solemn gloom upon the house.

A new complication, too, had arisen, the dread of the first death in the house. The eldest son had returned from his professional studies in London smitten with consumption. In the forlorn hope of saving her brother, whose mother was now more than occupied in sustaining her husband in his troubles, the young poetess threw herself into the breach, giving up all her former pursuits to nurse and tend the invalid, acting as his amanuensis, reading to him, watching, and trying to comfort him through long, dreary months, but all in vain. At last, when his days were drawing very near their end, and in the midst of a rigorous winter, the thunderbolt fell—the Chancery suit was lost ! And, despite the dying son and the dangerous season, no respite was allowed when the appointed day arrived for *turning them out of their old home*.

Fortunately, in anticipation of this possible defeat, and as some reward for his part in the fight, the father had left his son a beautiful little estate, which could not be touched by the Chancery suit, and a lovely old house and grounds, built and laid out by one of the Dukes of Devonshire. (See Plate VII.) To this the family removed from their birthplace, and there in the midst of a doubly heart-broken home the invalid soon died. Now came the climax of their disaster : all rents,

tythes, etc., of the lost estates, and the various perquisites from three manors,* of which the poetess's father had long been lord, were ordered by the Court of Chancery to be returned, dating the accumulation from the date of the first occupancy of the disputed estates. Thus were the family coffers drained from month to month and year to year, until all was paid. Nothing but the strictest economy and self-denial, causing all luxuries to be abandoned, the establishment to be cut down to the lowest practicable dimensions, and all hands to help in its working, enabled them to hold their own; and long before these difficulties were over the father of the house died, worn out with accumulated disappointments and vexations. As her two eldest sisters were now married,† the poetess, at the age of nineteen, was left as the chief help and companion of her widowed mother.

Her father and brother were both buried in a private mausoleum in the grounds of the present estate, and thus the memory of the past gloom was ever kept in mind, as evidenced in many poems written about this time, as, for example, in "Thoughts in the Chamber of Death"—

1st Verse.

Men pass it by, that solitary light
That shines from death's sad
chamber through the night,
Nor ask they why it glimmers there
so late;
The grief within is friendless,
desolate.
In loneliness our vigil we must
keep,
The stars look on, but marvel why
we weep;
There is no sympathy in outward
things
With the deep woe that oft the human
bosom wrings.

* * * *

6th Verse.

Yea! we unto ourselves a world
would make,
Unlike the one we live in;
peopling it
With forms decay knows not, for
whose sweet sake
To live, with whose fond feelings
ours to knit:

Fearing no more that, when we love
them most,
Beneath their firm young feet may
yawn the tomb;
That when we call them ours with
'love's sweet boast,
Even then they may depart and leave
the world in gloom.

7th Verse.

Vain fancy! near the spot where
death is shrouded
The wild flowers bloom and deck
the mossy stone—
Their bluebells, like a summer sky,
unclouded;
Within, but not without, Death,
is thine own.
So sing me, while the summer days
are ours;
Alas! those days depart and we
awake,
And find we only dreamed; the fair
young flowers
Depart, and all but death that silent
mound forsake.

* He was Lord of the Manors of Sandon, Lufnell and Cromer.

† The second to Sydney Dobell the poet.

Between the death of her eldest brother and her father, other anxieties had crowded round the girl's young life. Her eldest living brother and the brother next to and younger than herself—her favourite companion—dispirited by the gloomy collapse of their father's fortunes, and dazzled by the dreams of re-establishing them in an El Dorado, determined to join the party of early pioneers to the first "Californian gold-diggings." They had never travelled before, even in their own country, knew nothing of the world, of rough life, or of real hardship, and despite all persuasions to the contrary, with the rashness of ignorance, left their homes, certain in their own minds of a triumphant return to recompense their parents and their sister for this new blow. But they were horrified beyond measure at the immoral atmosphere at "the diggings," and, poisoned by the unhealthy surroundings, they became prostrated by fever, thus losing their chances of gain, and being forced to spend the money they took with them, and they were too proud to apply for more, even could they have communicated with home. After many wretched months, and after they were supposed to be dead, in the middle of a winter's night, half-starved and in rags, they dragged themselves back to their father's house. The youngest son had received his deathblow, and after lingering for some years, died of consumption. The elder brother never settled down again in England, and after a disappointment in love, went out to New Zealand; when, just as he was retrieving his fortunes, he was lost, with all his possessions, at sea.

The return of the brothers from the "diggings," and "the shipwreck," are graphically described by their sister in "Hours of Lonely Meditation," a series of word-paintings published in 1880, the introduction to which we quote, as a specimen of the author's prose composition:—

HOURS OF LONELY MEDITATION IN THE PICTURE GALLERY OF MEMORY.

There are few of us who do not possess a collection of pictures, unseen by any eyes except our own, certainly not to be viewed at the price of a shilling a peep. On the contrary, some of the pictures are too precious in our sight to be exposed to irreverent criticism; some may be so terrible or so sad that we conceal them carefully by a veil, as the veil was hung over the ghastly figure in the gallery of the Castle of Udolpho. And it is only on rare occasions that the owner of such pictures has the courage to remove the veil and face what is revealed behind, and the terrible memories invoked.

Some of these paintings possess great value in the eyes of the owner; to others their value might not be so apparent. Some are mere daubs with regard to execution, yet precious beyond all appreciable value, because touched by some dear hand long mouldering in the dust. Some are finished with every touch that love and skill can suggest. A few are left incomplete, with a blotch visible on some portion of the surface, as though the brush had fallen from the trembling hand of the artist.

It is not often that this weird chamber is visited in the garish light of day, and, strange as it may seem, these pictures look brightest and show their varied tints, lights, and shadows most distinctly when visited in the silent and melancholy hours of night. It is then that their possessor reaches for the key and unlocks the door, and sometimes with dimmed eyes, sometimes with limbs shaking with grief, or even terror, comes to examine his hidden treasures. So sadly, mournfully interesting are they that he is often unable to quit the spot, and remains there until the first pale streak of morning steals through some chinks in the closed and barred windows, and shines upon his haggard face.

To-night we stand upon the threshold of this gallery of *ours*—only. Who knows but that it may be the last time we shall ever visit it! For the hour is never known to us when we shall be called upon to rise in the morning light of a day too glorious for earth.

From "Versus A WOMAN Pro WOMEN."

The lines called "A Farewell to Odsey," supposed to be written "by one passing from the platforms of quiet country life to unknown backwoods in New Zealand," are intended for the parting words of the elder brother—*

Farewell, a long farewell!
For me, when evening's tranquil
hours are o'er;
The watchdog's surly bark, the far
sheep bell,
Shall wake the echoes of thy woods
no more.
I leave thee, sunny as thou art, and
fair—
I leave thee to thy calm, unbroken
rest;
My step will rouse no more the timid
hare,
Nor scare the brooding partridge
from its nest.

Farewell, a long farewell!
Ere yet a month hath rolled its
course away,
Ere many setting suns have lit thy dell
With the deep purple of the parting
day,
I shall be far, far absent, and for me
The curlew's note will henceforth
sound in vain;
The fox may haunt the wood or grassy
lea,
But step of mine will scare it not
again.

Farewell, a long farewell!
I shall think of thee when the spring
returns,
Recalling oft-times the sweet, tender
spell
Of thy rose hedges and thy green-
wood ferns;
I shall think of thee when the swallows
come,
And when thy fairest flowers are in
their prime;
Not *then* shall I forget, forsaken home,
How beautiful thou art in summer
time.

Farewell, a long farewell!
Full many a happy hour I owe to
thee,
What time the gentle dews of evening
fell
On lowly flower-bell or on lofty tree,
And birds were hushed in copsewood
and in dingle,
And voices died upon the summer
air,
When the deep shades of evening
seemed to mingle
And veil the earth for thought, for
rest, for prayer.

Farewell, a long farewell !
 I shall remember thee, too, when the
 night
 Full heavily hath fallen, and the swell
 Of worldly feeling dies, as with the
 light;
 When, poring o'er some wild or
 thoughtful book
 Through brightening starlight,
 when the flitting bat
 Told of the deepening hour, with
 dreamy look,
 Beside mine ivied casement I have
 sat.

Farewell, a long farewell !
 To them and thee, and when again
 we meet,
 What shall have been no prophet can
 foretell,
 Nor how the pulses of our hearts may
 beat ;
 It may be when the feeble hand of age
 Hath rung o'er hope's young grave
 his dreary knell ;
 Ah me ! that future, weird, mysterious
 page,
 I dare not seek to read—farewell !
 farewell !

The deaths of her three brothers are recorded in the verses entitled "The Graves of Three Brothers," and the death of a fourth brother, at a much later date, is recorded in a volume of "In the Watches of the Night," 1886.

As intimated at page 8, the young poetess had her time more than filled in helping her mother in her pressing domestic duties. But every moment that could be stolen—too often from the night—was eagerly occupied in scribbling down the poetry in which her thoughts were ever bursting for expression. No wonder, then, that, thus beset by unfavourable and by depressing conditions of life, her strength broke down; several protracted attacks of hæmoptysis occurred, and she narrowly escaped falling under the stroke of the family tendency to consumption. From this fate she was saved by a sudden gleam of light and hope that broke in upon the gloom of her life.

While they were still at the old Manor House, and before the thunderbolt of the lost Chancery suit had fallen, her second elder sister, considered to be "the beauty of the country around," had become engaged to Sydney Dobell, the poet, while he was almost a boy, and, after a long waiting, they were married, soon after the removal to "Odsey House" (July, 1844). In his "Legend of Hellcroft" and several other poems, Sydney Dobell described the scenes of his early courtship.

His brother Horace, who had recently commenced his medical studies, accompanied him to his wedding, and a remarkable instance of "true love at first sight" occurred between the young student and the young poetess. They met for the first time when the carriage was sent to Royston to meet the London coach, and though very few words were spoken, they have always declared that in their hearts they were bound for life before they reached Odsey House, a drive of about five miles. That the love which dawned on that day never waned is at all events proved by all the

incidents of their long and devoted life together.* It was the realisation of the young poetess's dearest dreams, and poem after poem teems with its influence alike in the earlier and the later of her works.

It is not usually wise to pry into young people's love letters. But the first that the young girl received from her—almost boy—lover was *unique*, and, as it struck the *keynote* of their long courtship, and of the love which was ever fresh during fifty-nine years of married life, we need not hesitate to introduce it here. It was in the form of a painting by her lover of an old illuminated manuscript, bordered with wild flowers, and contained the following beautiful poem by Fanny Kemble. It was dated, "London, February 28th, 1846" (See Plate II.) :—

ABSENCE.

What shall I do with all the days and
hours

That must be counted ere I see thy
face?

How shall I charm the interval that
lowers

Between this time and that sweet
time of grace?

Shall I in slumber steep each weary
sense,

Weary with longing? Shall I flee
away

Into past days, and with some fond
pretence

Cheat myself to forget the present
day?

Shall love for thee lay on my soul the
sin

Of casting from me God's great gift
of time?

Shall I these mists of memory locked
within,

Leave, and forget life's purposes
sublime?

Or how, or by what means may I
contrive

To bring the hour that brings thee
back more near?

How may I teach my drooping hope
to live

Until that blessed time, *and thou
art here?*

I'll tell thee! For thy dear sake I will
lay hold

Of all good aims, and consecrate to
thee,

In worthy deeds each moment that is
told

While thou, beloved one! art far
from me.

For thee I will arouse my thoughts to
try

All heavenward flights, all high and
holy strains;

For thy dear sake I will walk
patiently

Through these long hours, nor call
their moments pains.

I will this dreary blank of *absence*
make

A noble task time, and will therein
strive

To follow excellence, and to o'ertake
More good than I have done since
yet I live.

So may this dooméd time build up
in me

A thousand graces, *which shall thus
be thine;*

So may my love and longing hallowed
be,

And thy dear thought an influence
Divine.

* See the end.

We will now give examples from each end of the story. We find one of the earliest poems addressed to her lover while away at his studies in London—

1st Verse.

I sometimes feel, love, when the moon
is out,
And shining down on us with its
calm light,
And bats in the grey twilight flit about,
And trees grow shadowy in the
deepening night—
As if, in those delicious, solemn hours,
The world were far too glorious to be
ours;
As if a thought of bitterness and pain
Could never dwell within my heart
again.

* * * * *

End of 2nd Verse.

One star is rising now; though dim
and pale,
' Its light is glimmering faintly o'er
our vale;
Dear love! above the roar and the dull
sound
That murmurs from thy far-off city
dwelling,
How calmly it may shine upon thee,
telling
Of that fair home to which we both
are bound.

3rd Verse.

Go on in thy bright path, beloved;
my heart
Is ever with thee in thy onward way;
So far away from me as now thou art,
Thy spirit seems with me each pass-
ing day;
Thou art my guardian angel, and each
thought,
Each holy lesson that thy life hath
taught,
Is with me in all hours of joy or
grief;
And in the evening, when the day
grows dim,
And the wind trembles from flower-
leaf to leaf,
When night, with its dark shadows,
lies before us,
And the heart turns from worldly
thoughts to Him
Whose kind, forgiving eye is ever
o'er us;
Thy words seem spoken by each leaf
and flower,
Thy spirit breathing in each passing
hour.

* * * * *

And then, in 1880, about thirty-three years afterwards, during a serious illness—

LINES TO MY LOVE.

Mine own true love! from the first
hour I clasped
Thy firm and gentle hand, the magic
touch
Was even as though my future life I
grasped—
A life of hope, although I feared it
much.
Thou wilt not leave me, if thou dost
I die;
Thou can'st not leave me—let the
hours pass by,

And count them not for happiness or
sorrow,
Remembering only—there is yet to-
morrow.
That strange to-morrow—oh! I fear it
less
Than earthly days that darken and
depress,
Without a silver lining to the
cloud,
Or lifting of the head that grief hath
bowed.

My heart is full of love—of tender
pride,
Although my days are passed not by
thy side;
For where thou goest I can rarely
go.*
Not mine the power to heal, or soften
woe.

I cannot thank thee, oh! thou best
beloved,
To me the truest, purest amongst
men;
Nor can I paint thee with my heart
so moved,
Either by eloquence of lips or pen.

But I will wait for thee life's latest
hours,
Age shall not alter me, nor grief's
weird powers;
Knowing that from the first bright
hour we met,
I lost the right to freedom—to forget.

No human power our hands' true clasp
shall sever,
Love, while thou livest I am thine for
ever;
Nay! nor in future realms mine eyes
can see
A life, a state, that is not passed with
thee.

Again, in 1880, the following lines were written during an illness, which she thought might be fatal—

NO, LOVE, I FEAR NOT
DEATH.

No, love, I fear not death, yet greatly
fear
To leave thee lonely, O! mine own;
for this
I dread, since I, of all, to thee am
dear,
In kissing me thou givest love's last
kiss.

And thou wilt miss me under winter
skies,
When blighting snow is lying on the
lea,
And thou can'st meet no more mine
answering eyes—
Their light is lost upon this earth
to thee.

And thou wilt need me in the summer
days,
Yes! thou wilt ask for me at even-
tide;

And looking—nothing, love, will meet
thy gaze,
And feeling—nothing, love, is at thy
side.

Ah! love, not long may'st thou be
desolate,
Thy faithful heart shall in its season
soar
Into the realms where I shall ever
wait
To rest upon thy heart for ever-
more.

It must be God's own time, beloved,
we know;
Yes, dearest, it may not be over-
long
Ere thou wilt leave thy weary life
below,
Called by the sound of heaven's
celestial song.

* Referred to his being engaged in practice while she lay ill in bed.

And still later, 1886—

TO —.

Yes, as thou lovest me, so, dear, do I
Love thee with all my soul, with all
my heart;

Have I not told thee I should surely
die

If thou and I were on this earth to
part?

O! *for thee*—could it save thee from
sore pain,

And could it help thee—gladly
would I give

All that I have on earth; and yet
again,

*How joyfully for thee would also
live!*

Thou hast been dearer than all words
have told;

More perfect love was thine, from
early years,

Than any I had dreamt that earth
could hold—

Both in the hours of joy and hours
of tears.

Love! in the years I pray may yet be
thine,

Whatever storms break o'er life's
later days,

I pray that on thy placid brow may
shine

A light, the fairest known to earthly
ways.

The light that shines around a saintly
head,

The light that on few earthly paths is
shed,

The light that in thy steady eyes doth
burn,

That light from heaven that shall to
heaven return.

Again, at a later date, she writes—

I could not praise thee, O! thou best
one, more

Than now I praise thee for thy love
and grace;

Though thou wert dear in all the years
before,

Thy later love fills yet a broader
space.

Again, see "Living to Help"; "In the Watches of the Night."

Again, 1886, "One Brave and True"—

The strong and simple ways of life
he trod,

Were neither of the Pharisee, nor
hind;

So that he walked the ways approved
of God,

He cared not for the plaudits of his
kind.

A calm and ever a straightforward
man,

He slandered no one's home and no
one's hearth;

He held in scorn a yet too common
plan,

To win by pushing others from our
path.

The envious slandered him at honour's
gate,

Sought, vainly, vilely, to disturb his
rest,

Pursued him with a mean, vindictive
hate—

He went his way, God's peace within
his breast.

This love, which events proved to have been so true, was hotly opposed by the student's mother when it came to her knowledge. Between her father's family and that of the father of the poetess there had been a religious feud, and she had not yet forgiven her eldest son (Sydney Dobell, the poet, who married Mrs. H. Dobell's elder sister) for marrying the girl for whom he took a "boyish fancy" on a chance meeting at the house of his mother's father (Mr. Samuel Thompson), some years before the feud began; and the idea of a second son taking a wife from the same source she could not endure, and she put in the way of the attachment every opposition she could.

But a much greater difficulty than this threatened the young people's peace, and was made the most of by their opponents. The student had chosen his own profession, and had thrown himself into its pursuit with the most ambitious devotion. In it were bound up all his future hopes and prospects, from which he knew no turning back. The young poetess had no knowledge of the medical profession in its highest walks and scientific aspects; such acquaintance as she had had with doctors had been with unfavourable specimens, whom she had chanced to meet in the cottages of her father's villagers, or in the illnesses and deathbeds at home. She had conceived a strong aversion to the idea of a doctor's life, and had not concealed from her friends a determination *never to marry a medical man*. This dark cloud of difficulty was the subject of many controversies and vain appeals from each side. Each was obdurate. Yet, still, hoping for some solution of the difficulty, their love went on, and for a time the subject had been dropped as too dangerous for further discussion.

Suddenly the cloud lifted, and was dismissed for ever by a romantic incident. During one of the student's vacations the lovers met at a house amongst the Gloucestershire hills, temporarily occupied by Sydney Dobell and his wife, the sister of the poetess. They had ridden out together to sketch a village church. Tying up their ponies to the gate and selecting a special view of the church, they sat down upon a mound to sketch it, when their eyes fell upon a tablet on the church wall, recording the deaths of seven brothers and sisters from consumption, the complaint from which so many of the poetess's near relations had died; and, having fresh in her mind the failure of all medical aid in the case of her recently lost brother, she was overcome with emotion, and expressing her horror at this blight upon families, gave vent to her feeling of the uselessness of doctors and the emptiness of their professed powers.

Upon this the student asked: "What if *he* should devote his life to discovering a cure for this scourge?" No more was said until after a

long pause, and when the emotion had subsided, she exclaimed, "Yes; I would idolise the man who could so dignify a doctor's life. Let us work together to solve the problem; never again will I object to a profession that can be devoted to such noble objects." (See the end.)

The promise was kept. She embraced the new idea with characteristic devotion, and soon after the student's return to his studies in London she sent him two poems, first, "The Student's Garret," evidently inspired by a dread lest he should be induced by her lately uttered words to work himself to death. Thus she says—

* * * *

Yet still, as midnight passed away,
And starlight faded from the sky,
The student by his lonely ray,
Sat reading, with unwearied eye;

And the calm moon seemed looking
down

With a half wondering, pitying glance,
Through the soft locks of palest brown
That framed that thoughtful counten-
ance.

Alas! though hope and strength might
now

Shine on that young, determined brow,
Its spirit yet may be o'ercast,
The avenging shadow fall at last.

Years since that brilliant moonlight
night had flown,
And daylight's last and melancholy
smile,

Through casement frames of grey and
crumbling stone,
Lit a cathedral's dim and solemn aisle.

* * * *

The wind was whistling with a dreary
sound—

And through the vaults of death and
cloister damp,

It came and went, unfelt, unwept by
all,

Even where, wrapt in heavy, sable pall,
Lay the young student of the midnight
lamp.

The second poem, "The Good Physician," was to tell how completely she had realised her own conception of the physician's life, and entered into her lover's highest ambitions. We quote some disjointed passages:—

An aged man sat musing on the past,
Recalling patiently each recollection,
Upon whose pale and furrowed brow
was cast

The shade of many cares and much
reflection.

* * * *

Musing, he sat, recalling as a dream
The image of a young, aspiring boy,
Pacing the streets at morn's most early
gleam,

With footsteps light and bright eyes
full of joy;

It might be with that vision in his
heart

Of future years, our childhood only
knows,

With which too oft in later life we
part,

And think of as a phantom at its
close.

More than a dream, in truth, of bril-
liant fame,

Of high renown, glowed in that
ardent mind,

All youth's proud hopes of love, of
wealth, of name,
Were his; but even then, with these
combined,

Were nobler aspirations, strong and
yet
Growing more daily strong, as he
began
To comprehend the task before him
set:

*To comfort and to heal his fellow-
man.*

That energetic figure bent at length,
That boy's rich hair was scattered now
and grey.

* * * *

He did a lone and narrow room recall,
A single lamp that half illumined it;
A table like that room, confined and
small,

Whereby a student oft was wont to
sit,
And where, with books and papers
round him piled,
He used to study, with a mind un-
tired,

Until the star of morn upon him
smiled,
Or in its socket his dim light
expired.

No useless learning that which he
pursued,

No idle lore engaged his leisure then;
No wild, ambitious hopes his mind
amused,

Untouched by him the poet's glow-
ing pen;

Or, if aught visionary could allure
That meditative brow from sober
thought,
No *selfish* dream at least was his—that
cure
For maladies deemed fatal might
be wrought.

Then, as he pondered, there arose
again,

Remembrance of that student's
later life;

He saw him bending o'er the couch of
pain,

He saw him where disease and death
were rife,

Applying all the powers that he pos-
sessed

To rescue from a sad or early grave,
His fellow-creatures—or to give them
rest

And passing comfort if he could not
save.

O! he, the just and the upright, who
can

Look back thus on his active life
and feel

He has dealt rightly by his fellow-man,
And if he failed, yet ever sought to
heal—

How must his heart such recollections
cheer,

Gilding the very pathway to the
tomb!

To him the thoughts of death can
bring no fear,

And age, though premature, can
bring no gloom.

* * * *

That day in the country churchyard was never forgotten, and its
influence is indelibly marked upon the work of the physician's life.

When they married (July 5th, 1849) they set to work at once at
their long-wished-for task; every leisure hour was devoted to it, the young
wife acting as amanuensis, her husband working at his investigations, and
handing to her passages of works for quotation, notes to copy, references to
hunt up, and so forth. With the same objects in view, Dr. Dobell accepted,
in 1859, the post of Physician to the Royal Hospital for Diseases of the

Chest, which afterwards acquired a world-wide fame as the field of those investigations and experiments which led to his introducing to the profession, in 1863, the use of pre-pancreatized foods in the treatment of consumption and other wasting diseases, by which a complete revolution was effected in the feeding of the sick. (See his Paper to the Royal Society, 1867.)

In the introduction to his work, published in 1866,* he refers to these early works in the following words: "The greater part of my leisure during the last sixteen years has been devoted to the study of pulmonary consumption and other forms of tuberculosis, and to collecting, assorting, comparing, and testing the facts recorded by others directly or indirectly connected with the subject. The ideas which led to this plan of work were set forth in a paper which I read before the Abernethian Society of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, while I was a student there in 1848."

At this work husband and wife used to sit up late after the business of the day was over, and thus continued those habits of *night study* which each had formed before marriage, and which the poetess thus refers to, in the preface to her latest work. "'In the Watches of the Night' was chosen as the title of these poems, because nearly all of them were written between the hours of ten and two at night."†

The two long poems, "Ethelstone" and "Eveline" (which gave the title to a collection published by Kegan Paul & Co. in 1881) were written in the first few years after marriage, during the hours of this night study with her husband, in the intervals when he did not happen to have any work in which her hands could help. These two poems were printed, *for private circulation*, soon after they were written. Several reasons decided the young people not to *publish* them. One reason undoubtedly was that it might be annoying to Sydney Dobell, who was then publishing his poems, to have another poet of the same name, although not of the same blood, publishing at the same time. The most potent reason, however, was a fear on the part of the young people that the quiet, studious, and domestic life to which they had determined to devote themselves might be disturbed by entering the "literary circle." The poems were, therefore, only given to a few private friends, and were never *published* until thirty years after they were written.

The portrait (Plate III.) is copied from a pencil sketch taken by her husband, May, 1853, and the words scribbled across the background are the first two lines of the following poem, then just composed, and which was afterwards embodied in the collection referred to above.‡

* "On Tuberculosis : its Nature, Causes, and Treatment."

† Up to 1888 Dr. Dobell devoted some portion of almost every day (or rather night) to the further prosecution of these studies. See his work on Bacillary Consumption, 1888.

‡ "Ethelstone, Eveline, and other Poems," by Mrs. Horace Dobell. Kegan Paul & Co., 1881.

DREAMS.

Dreams! how they haunt the brain,
 With fantasies as beautiful as vain;
 The long-lost dead arise,
 To gaze upon us with forgotten eyes,
 Until we start from sleep
 To find them fading into air—and weep.

Forms that for years have lain
 In marble rest, in undisturbed repose,
 Return to us again
 With recollections of life's darker
 woes;
 Bringing the bitter tears
 That wept the sorrows of departed
 years.

Eyes that the icy hand
 Of death hath long since closed, unseal
 again,
 And from a far-off land
 The absent come—a pale and silent
 train—
 Whose mild yet tender gaze
 Recalls the fervid love of youth's fond
 days.

The heart's most secret grief
 That finds but in forgetfulness relief,
 Nor there can find it long;
 The heart's most cruel grief, most
 biting wrong—

Aye! all we may have learned
 Of sorrow, to the mind is thus
 returned.

Yet sad it were if all
 We loved should pass for evermore
 away;
 Shrouded beneath the pall,
 Whose sombre folds conceal their dark
 decay;
 'Twere better that once more
 They thus should visit those they loved
 before.

Ah! bitter though it is
 When in those mystic dreams some
 gentle tone
 Recalls a faded bliss,
 To waken from our joy and find it
 gone:
 It would be greater pain
 To know it ne'er could be recalled
 again.

So come, ye shadows pale,
 From the dim region where may be
 your rest;
 Not with despairing wail,
 Or sad hands clasped upon each
 shadowy breast;
 Rather with memories of a happier
 time,
 When youth was bright, and sorrow
 seemed a crime.

September 7th, 1850, fourteen months after their marriage, a daughter was born. This was a source of extreme delight; for the young poetess, while ardently desiring to become a mother, had suffered many qualms lest she might be disappointed, as no children had yet been born of the two previous marriages in the family. With characteristic resolve she now determined to leave off composing, and give herself up to the care of her family, to helping her husband in his arduous labours, and in economising their pecuniary means, which at this time were very small indeed, for the family Chancery suit, to which we have referred, had deprived the girl of most of her expected dowry, and the young doctor had nothing but what his brains could earn; for some years therefore, they were much pinched to keep up the necessary appearances. But

better times came sooner than could at first have been expected, for her husband's zeal and never-ceasing hard work brought him early fame, and with it, in due time, came a better income.

The following extract from a letter to her husband's mother, dated February 17th, 1851, gives a pretty picture of the young mother at home, when her little one was five months old :—

MY DEAR MRS. DOBELL,

. . . Little Mary is *so* round and plump—she is like a little partridge. Then she has such a beautiful little mouth, and is always crowing, blowing and bubbling with it, and her little button of a nose turns up more than ever ! She understands play, too, and *shouts* with delight if you cover up her face and play “bo-peep” with her. But her favourite time for a game is by the nursery fire, when she is quite undressed at night—she jumps about like a parched pea, she is so pleased ; and we generally laugh outright, both of us, for she always laughs to see me or Horace laugh. I always make her untie her own shoes at night. She turns the toes up to her face, pulls at the strings until they are untied, and then tugs at the toes of her socks until they come off. But she has her serious moments, too, like other people, when she lies on the hearthrug with one finger hooked in her mouth, watching everything that I do ; and she always seems to enjoy, with a good deal of serious dignity, a ride round the room in an armchair, which her papa sometimes gives her on his return home in the evening. She does not sleep very well at night, and sometimes it is hard work to get up in the morning, after having been disturbed at night, but she won't sleep after six, when she insists on coming into our bed, and kicks me with her little feet, pulls my hair, and *shouts* at me until I consent to get up. . . .

The article I spoke of in the “Magazine” was in favour of the country, and, of course, I did not find fault with it on that account, for I love the country very much indeed, but it seemed to me to take a wrong view of town life in general, therefore I replied to it. . . . Baby's love and a kiss. With love as usual,

Affectionately yours,

E. M. DOBELL.

Extract from another letter to her mother-in-law, showing her bravery.
June 12th, 1852 :—

About an hour after Sidney Dobell left on last Monday I went to bed, leaving Horace up, when there was a tremendous outcry in the streets, and presently both the housebells were violently rung, the knocker was almost hammered off, and two policemen's rattles sprung. I thought there was a murder in the street, and sprang up in great alarm, but on opening my door I *found the passage in flames*. I could not tell but that the top of the house was on fire, as the people called out from the street, seeing the flames from the window. So I caught up little Mary (one year and ten months old) and down I rushed through the flames. Horace instantly gave orders that none of the rabble should be admitted, and ran upstairs, and quickly extinguished

the fire. The mob were so pleased with his promptitude that they cheered him. Very little damage was done. The servant had carelessly left a candle on the window-sill, and it had caught the blind and communicated the fire to the woodwork; so, shining through the windows, it looked terrific. The street was completely blocked up by two fire-engines, two escapes, and a crowd of neighbours and passers-by. Little Mary clung tight to me through all the uproar, too frightened or too confident in mamma's care to cry.

Other children came in due course, and the young wife was more than fully occupied with her home duties. Although by this time all threatenings of consumption had passed away, her health was far from strong, and like so many persons of highly nervous and sensitive temperaments, she was a martyr to migraine and other neuralgias. The slightest over-fatigue or extra excitement, whether pleasurable or not, had its inevitable penalty in a violent attack of headache, attended with sleeplessness and sickness, which greatly complicated the discharge of her now numerous duties.

Poetry was put aside in a marvellous way, considering how completely it had absorbed the interest of her life up to this time. It was only allowed a place when the impulse became irresistible, and even then the compositions were unseen for years by any one except her husband. It was thus that during many of the most active years of her London life, while, as we have seen (page 5), she was distinguished for her lovely voice and musical talents, the majority of her friends hardly knew that she could write. For the reasons we have mentioned at page 19, she purposely kept them in this ignorance.*

In 1865 (aged 37, Plate I., frontispiece) her youngest child had scarlet fever, while staying at a country cottage for change of air, and her mother nursed her night and day, not fearing contagion because she had had the fever in early life, and had previously nursed her other children with the same disease without catching it. But, shut up in the close quarters of the cottage, she became direly poisoned, and had a long, complicated, and lingering illness, from which she with difficulty recovered, much shattered in nerves and in general health. It was during this watchful nursing of her "little one" in the cottage, that the following lines were written, called—

* Programme of educational work with the children, found in an old desk—date anterior to 1864. Monday—Nine till half-past all arithmetic; Violet plays till ten; Horatia writes; Horatia reads and Violet writes till half-past; Violet reads till eleven; quarter hour to self, half hour learn music by rote; Mary one hour painting or learning poetry; half hour read history to self; eleven to twelve music. Ditto, Wednesdays and Fridays except needlework instead of painting for Mary on Friday. Tuesday—Horatia reads; Violet to self, Mary ditto, history to half-past nine; French till half-past ten; Violet plays till eleven; Horatia writes; Mary geography; Violet and Horatia geography till half-past eleven; Violet reads to self till twelve; Mary, music till twelve. Ditto Thursdays and Saturdays.

A SAD LULLABY.

Sleep, little one, for I am ever near,
Both in the night and in the hours
of day ;

Sleep, precious one, who art to us so
dear ;

Thy parents o'er thee watch and ever
pray
That strength and joy, ere long, again
may shine
Out of those sweet and tender eyes of
thine.

Sleep, little one, around thee lightly
fall

The soft, pink curtains, flushing thy
pale cheek ;

Sleep, precious one, so prized and
loved by all,
Although, alas ! so wasted and so
weak ;

Pray God a better time is nearing now,
To bring back health to that fair
childish brow.

Sleep, little one, the fevered hour is
past ;

Fresh violets now are ready for thy
hand ;

Thy days of darkness, dear, are gone
at last,

Thy good physician hath a magic
wand !

And yet again may run those little feet,
Where sunlight glows, where flowers
are fresh and sweet.

It was not till 1870 that she had sufficiently recovered from the effects of this illness to return to her home duties, and to take part in the marriage of her eldest daughter, then 19. After an engagement, which had been a source of much anxiety to their parents, the newly married pair appeared to be delightfully settled in a pretty place within easy reach of London. Unfortunately, this promised peace did not last long, and within two years the young husband, discouraged by some discoveries relating to the prospects of the firm in which he had become a partner, and dazzled by the accounts then reaching England of the "diamond discoveries" in South Africa, threw up his partnership, parted with his house, and joined in the first "rush to the fields."

The shock and sorrow of thus unexpectedly parting with her eldest daughter under such unpromising aspects, brought to a climax the already damaged state of her nervous system, by which many of the best years of her life were nearly blotted out. Awaking one morning from a troubled sleep, she was found to have completely lost her memory—that memory which had before been of extraordinary brightness. This was followed by a complete collapse of physical power, threatenings of spinal paralysis, paroxysms of frightful cramps, and neuralgia, first in one part of the body, then in another ; horrible dreams, night terrors and delirium, loss of power to take food, and consequent emaciation. For long and weary years it seemed as though there was no hope ; partial recoveries took place under different forms of treatment, but not to last ; memory did not return, and her lovely singing voice had gone.

Through these sad years she was devotedly nursed by her two remaining

daughters (Violet and Horatia), to whose incessant and angel-like watching she, again and again, owed the maintenance of life during those recurrences of collapse, when nutriment could only be got down by spoonfuls under the persuasion of her husband or her children. Skilled nurse after nurse was tried in vain—her children by day and her husband by night were the only nurses who could succeed.*

This long period of eclipse in her life was rendered additionally distressing by its coinciding with the flood-tide of her husband's fame and work, with the growing into womanhood of her two younger daughters, and with those years of her own life which are generally considered the prime.

"Society," to some extent, was obliged to be kept up, for the sake of the girls, and as the intervals of comparative improvement in her condition became more satisfactory, she managed to help by her presence. Both the girls became engaged but would not hear of marriage until their mother should be well enough to be left. It was her most earnest wish to see her sweet nurses happily settled at the earliest possible time, and a more than usually protracted and promising rally being taken advantage of, her "darling Violet" was married in 1875 to Dr. Charles Meymott Tidy; leaving her younger sister Horatia to continue the duties at home. By the kind consideration of Dr. Tidy, it was arranged that Violet should live close by her mother, and this became a great comfort to both. Memory was now showing glimpses of recovery, and strength was sufficiently restored to enable the mother to enter keenly into the enjoyment of seeing her child's domestic joy in a house of her own. And in 1876 the arrival of a little granddaughter, and in 1877 of a little grandson, were subjects of mutual delight and interest. Meanwhile, Horatia, the youngest girl, had married Mr. G. Broke Freeman, the barrister son of the Archdeacon of Exeter, and was happily settled in London, but rather out of the way of frequent intercourse with her parents. Still the wrench of their leaving home was softened.

* The following extract from one of many letters written to his mother by her husband will give an idea of the terrible nature of these illnesses :—

84, Harley Street, June, 1871.

"There can now be no doubt (as I have feared all along) that we have to deal with a serious disease of the spinal nerves, and that only the blessing of heaven upon our remedies and upon the efforts of nature can save the patient from general paralysis, even when liberated from the agonies of the present stage. . . . This is the fourth Sunday since my poor wife has not left her bed, except with the greatest difficulty, to have it made. The whole of that time she has been in a distressed dream, and even yet does not recognise the fact that she is in London and with me (she had been at their country house till the very day she was taken ill, except now and then for a few minutes. In her own mind she lives in a nest of snakes and scorpions, for ever striving to devour her. My prayer that this cup of misery may be taken from her and from me remains as yet unanswered! . . . I live on hope, and still hope all may be well. . . . I do not tell our two girls (who take turns in nursing) all my fears, lest they should be too distressed to do their nursing cheerfully.

"With regard to a nurse you will be glad to know that we have one in the house whom I selected from our hospital. But the nurse is of little use at present, except by working behind the scenes, my poor wife not having seen her before the delirium set in does not understand her presence; . . . the sight of her excites terrible delusions of poisoners, robbers, and so forth, unless Violet or Horatia are present too."

Their elder sister was still abroad; for, after a disastrous failure at the diamond fields, her husband had gone with her and their little son to New Zealand, to cultivate a neglected estate belonging to his father's family.

During the many lingering hours of partial convalescence, while strength and memory were unequal to much reading, Mrs. Dobell was supplied with all the arrears of pictures illustrating the events that had occurred during her long period of oblivion; and as it became known to her friends that the amusement of examining and arranging these had proved a success, many hundredweights of pictures poured in from various sources at home and abroad.

She was so much impressed with the value that these pictures were to her that she determined to give the same pleasure and advantage to the poor patients in hospitals. With characteristic zeal, energy, and perseverance, that showed how her health was at last coming back, she worked at cutting out, sorting, and mounting this huge mass of pictures. These she had bound into scrap-books, and after supplying her grandchildren and many special friends, she was able to present several large volumes of selected scraps to most of the London hospitals, and to the chief hospitals and convalescent institutions in the provinces, each volume having the following words written on its title page: "Many years of suffering have taught me how often *pictures* may beguile the weary hours of illness and convalescence. And the hope that hospital patients may feel as I have done has made it a delightful work to arrange these scraps for their use. —84, Harley Street, 1879." The numerous grateful acknowledgments from the patients and their attendants amply proved to her how well her hours of convalescence had been spent.

Her husband, always her chief physician, had suggested these pictures as a first step towards the restoration of memory; and this was followed up by his inducing her again to take up her pen, that had for so many years been laid aside, and to begin by writing out some reminiscences in prose, if she did not yet feel equal to verse. This led, little by little, to the production of a small book, published anonymously under the title, "Life behind her Screens."

The last words of the preface to this little work, dated 1879, tell of the impending sorrow which was then approaching, more certainly than the mother was allowed to know: "The idea of printing these stories first originated in the hope that they might amuse and lighten the sick leisure of a dearly beloved daughter" (Violet).

The book opens with a sketch called "Our Village," to which we have referred at page 4, as describing some scenes around her old home in

Hertfordshire, and many of the other stories refer to the same neighbourhood, as, for example, "The Old Grange and its Eccentric Inhabitants," "Another Instance of Mysterious Death," "Willis the Poacher," "The House of a Thousand Years." These reminiscences were varied by "A Few Words Concerning Governesses: with some Remarks on Female Education"; "The Collapse of a Feeble Nature," etc., etc., and the book finishes with "Impromptu lines on hearing of the hopeless illness of Constantia," a favourite cousin, who in girlhood had lived in the nearest country house to the poetess's home, and had married her second brother, Mr. Herbert Fordham. It is dated August 12th, 1879:—

They tell me thou art dying, while
the sound is on the breeze
Of the hum of many beetles, of the
wild birds in the trees;
While those that watch beside thee
with heartbroken murmurs pray
That the hand of the Destroyer yet a
Greater Hand shall stay.

Oh, thou friend of many seasons; oh,
thou faithful friend of years,
I cannot hear thy fate without a rush
of bitter tears;
The calm walks of our girlhood are
returning to my mind,
When spring's bright gladness faded,
or the summer's sun declined.

When we strolled beneath our fir trees,
with soft moss beneath our feet,
And the smell of early roses and of
new-made hay was sweet,
And when you wandered onwards with
a closer friend than I;

Ah! those days of early friendships
whose dear memory cannot die.

Companion, wife, and mother, all in
one brave heart combined,
Few had thy powers of soothing, or
thy gentleness of mind,
No word of careless mockery *our*
friendship ever marred,
Thy sympathy was gentle, even
reproof was never hard.

In illness you remembered me with
all a sister's kindness,
And my faults you treated leniently,
with more than sister's blindness;
We, who may follow, well may wish
so pure a close as thine
To life's long, weary pilgrimage—'tis
we who must repine;
While we tread the arduous path that
thou so patiently hast trod,
And remain below to mourn thee,
thou wilt be at peace with God.

Attached to these lines is a note from her brother: "Thank you for sending the beautiful lines. . . . I shall often read them with sad thoughts of the past. . . . Connie read them, and says, 'Pray be comforted on my account. I have much to comfort me in seeing every one so full of love. I am quite resigned to wait God's will, and hope He may comfort those who are left.' Your and your husband's sympathy have been one of my greatest pleasures in life." It was to visit this old friend on her deathbed that she made the first long journey after her illness, and the above lines indicate the first return to poetical composition.

But the first passionate burst of the old fire was excited by circumstances referred to in many subsequent verses. Just as this period of her convalescence she suddenly and most unfortunately discovered that a lady friend in whom she had placed absolute confidence, and who had been with her in one of the worst phases of her illness, when all her thoughts and words were the mere *wanderings of delirium*,* had allowed herself to repeat some of these baseless mutterings, which she had heard while sitting by the sick bed, and had thereby set up a gossip derogatory to the pure and spotless character of her friend. In the first rush of indignant surprise she wrote "An Impromptu Address to Calumny," and about the same time "A Boundless Empire, or 'La Calomnie' the Mighty Empress."

IMPROMPTU ADDRESS TO CALUMNY.

O Calumny! thou cruel and poisonous
snake,
That crawls from filthy swamp or
nettled brake;
O Calumny! upon whose hateful trail,
The fruit falls rotted and the flowers
grow pale.

None can escape thy snares—the
meanest, least,
Who crawl life's thoroughfares; the
holiest priest
Who prays within his cell secure,
alone;
Nor even a monarch on the proudest
throne.

None can escape thee! not the noblest
fame,
The humblest footsteps, or the loftiest
name;
And heads revered must meet thy
dastard blow,
Nor brow escape that shall be pure as
snow.

The mother, bending o'er her dying
son,
The knight, whose laurels had been
hardly won,
The maiden and her lover—even the
child,

Thy foul and falsest slanders have
defiled.

Who hath not known thee? Who,
however pure,
From thy degrading shadow is secure?
Who hath not been with noble anger
stirred,
When first thy vile and loathsome
voice he heard?

Insidious, crawling viper! on thy
track

There is no marching forwards, nor
yet back;
More wary than the fox, and far more
vile—

For Reynard snarls, but Slander wears
a smile.

Thou meanest worm! who would com-
passion feel

When placing on thy head his hardest
heel?

None than thyself more shameless
words have spoken,

None than thyself more sinless hearts
have broken.

There is no spot where poverty is sure,
No hearth where truth and honour are
secure,

No home where Calumny hath not its
berth;

Heaven is exempt, but never man, on
earth!

* See p. 24.

A BOUNDLESS EMPIRE; OR LA CALOMNIE, THE MIGHTY EMPRESS.

I have been a mighty traveller, I have
seen unnumbered lands,
And my swift, unwearied glance has
swept the wildest desert sands;
I have scaled the loftiest heights by
human vision ever seen,
And through the darkest valleys have
my curious footsteps been.

I have been a mighty traveller, I have
breathed Sahara's air,
I have strayed through densest forests,
where the homes were few but fair;
And when I saw a casement that
seemed far too bright and clean,
I have breathed upon it heavily, then
passed away unseen.

I have been a mighty traveller, and
my steps were full of joy,
When with Paris and frail Helen I
was gay in ancient Troy;
To Telemachus alone, I ever failed to
deal a blow,
While Minerva was beside him to
protect the boy from woe.

I have dwelt within the palace, I have
lingered in the cot,
There is no sacred refuge or retreat
that knows *me* not!

I have whispered words of misery to
the happy and the young,
I have wakened ghastly music when
the harpstrings were unstrung.

No one can ever conquer me, my
power is over all,
And even the mightiest empires I have
shaken to their fall;
Nay! often have I held in bond the
proudest heart and hand,
For even death itself obeys *my* whisper
or command.

If the path thy foes are treading seems
to thee too fair and bright,
If there is glowing brilliancy where
thou would'st have it night,
Invoke me in the sunshine or invoke
me in the shade,
I am ever near, and solemnly I
promise thee my aid!

November, 1880.

The versatility of the poet's powers were shown by several comic lyrics referring to the same subject, of which we give the following, called—

MORE HAPPY THOUGHTS.

Old ladies like their scandal, and old
ladies like their tea,
But which is it they like the best, I
think I hear you say,
O! Scandal, by a hundred times, or so
it seems to me,
For that they can have served to them
at all times in the day.

O! Scandal is delightful, for it makes
the hours pass by
Without a break upon the way, so
rapidly they fly;
It soothes and comforts one so much,
wherever one may be,
To think our friends so foolish—that
so much more wise are we.

O! Scandal is delightful, the most
tasty of all food,
For it makes one feel so com-
fortable, O! *so* wise and good,
For *we* don't do as others do—are not
such fools as they,
And can we say a wiser thing, or one
more pleasant, pray?

Yes, tea comes in the morning, or the
evening of the day,
But Scandal ever fills the mighty
goblet on the tray;
Our tea we swallow down but in small
cupfuls at a time,
But Scandal is served up to us in
bumpers, when it's prime!

With the few exceptions, of which we have given specimens, very little poetry was written at present, the chief occupations being the making of scrap-books for the grandchildren, and for the hospitals, and reading up the books which had been missed during her illness.

She had known something of Dinah Muloch in the early part of her career, and much admired "John Halifax." She therefore seized upon "Young Mrs. Jardine," the last book by the same author, in expectation of a literary treat. Instead of which it filled her with indignation at the insults that she felt it cast on women; especially was she incensed by the general indictment that women are "*feeble, useless, half-educated; taught to believe that ignorance is amusing and helplessness attractive!*" and that "the man who has will to choose, courage to win, and faithfulness to keep is almost unknown to modern chivalry; *as rare, alas! as the woman who deserves to be adored.*"

It is a striking illustration of the generous impulses of the poet's nature, that, deeply as she had been, so recently, disgusted by the calumnies of her former confidential friend, they had not in the least had the effect—which they would certainly have had upon a narrower mind—of embittering her against women in general; on the contrary, they had only served to illumine, by contrast, the devoted faithfulness, the patient and untiring love with which her daughters had watched over her illness, and the truthfulness and high-mindedness which she had seen in other women. Stirred by these recollections, she could not rest till she had refuted the charges contained in "Young Mrs. Jardine," and with a rapidity that surprised her friends she wrote and published the work entitled "*Versus a Woman, Pro Women,*" bearing on its title page the words, "Justice, Justice, Justice" ("*Measure for Measure*"), and the following dedicatory lines:—

Woman! from whom his first lisped	Who smiles with him in joy, grieves
prayer he learns,	in his woes,
To whom in all his early griefs he	And save when shared with him, no
turns,	pleasure knows;
In whose fond arms, upon whose	Heaven has ordained her his one
faithful breast,	constant love,
His cares are soothed, his troubles laid	Both here on earth and in the world
at rest;	above.

We quote here the following striking passages from Chapter II., as a specimen of the author's trenchant style and of the force with which she stated her case for the defence:—

"And, sure now, and is it against women that ye spake so evil?" an Irishman might ask in genuine astonishment, had he heard that women are

"feeble" and "useless." "Is it not my Biddy, the ould woman, that hoes the praties, *washes* the pigs, and *feeds* me?"

Who is it that governs England and her great dependencies, larger and more troublesome to rule, sometimes, than England herself? Who is it that—assisted formerly by her noble-hearted husband, who knew well how to value a woman—looked carefully, thoughtfully, wisely into all the multitudinous affairs of State? *

A Woman.

Who is it that assists and counsels the Prime Minister—whose work is only second, in anxiety, to that of the head of the Kingdom—in the privacy of his own chamber? †

A Woman.

Who is it that, in the country, hoes the wet turnip and mangel-wurzel fields, assists in hedging and ditching, sometimes in winnowing corn and feeding cattle? ‡

A Woman.

Who is it that, in manufacturing towns, sorts the dusty rags and papers, and assists in the various health-destroying mills?

A Woman.

Who is it that does so much of the heavy work of keeping clean and in order our manufactories and offices?

A Woman.

Who was it that superintended the ghastly hospitals at Scutari during the Crimean War?

A Woman.

Who was it that, some years ago, wrote one of the best novels of the season, called "John Halifax"?

A Woman.

Who is it that is trusted to transmit some of the most important life and death messages of the telegraphic wire, in which office everything depends upon care and exactitude?

A Woman.

We pity our authoress that no friend induced her to inspect that marvellous work of a woman's brush—Rosa Bonheur's "Horse Fair." A woman has here competed with a man, the very king of his subject, on his own battleground, and, by the verdict of the whole artistic world, we believe we may say, has been declared victor! Sir Edwin Landseer's horses, fine as his undoubtedly were in his better days, were yet surpassed by her—it was pronounced—although by her alone.

At the Royal Academy Exhibition our authoress might have seen that wonderfully pathetic picture, "The Remnants of an Army," also painted by a woman; not to speak of the charming works of Mrs. Ward, Miss Paterson, Miss Edwards, and other lady artists.

It is pleasant to remember that the ancients decided that the arts were best symbolised by women. . . . And, again, we might, indeed, ask

* See "Life of the Prince Consort."

† See "Life of Lord Palmerston."

‡ Again and again have we seen them so employed in the rural counties of Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire.

her . . . Have there been no Somervilles, no De Staëls, no Siddons, no Keans, no Ristoris, no Malibrans, no Grisis, no Jenny Linds, no Garrett Andersons; even in recent times have we no authoresses of sterling worth?

Of course, the work produced a great sensation, and was bitterly attacked by the literary friends of the authoress of "Young Mrs. Jardine," both in the public prints and in private letters; one over-zealous friend being foolish enough to offer to pay for the whole edition if its author would "immediately withdraw it from circulation." Others tried to quash it by representing it as a spiteful, personal attack. But it was not to be so put down; the true character of the book, its absolute freedom from any personal or narrow-minded feelings, and its noble defence of women by a woman, were justly and repeatedly recognised by independent reviewers, as seen in the following quotations:—

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

Just now, when the subject of women is occupying so much attention, the present work by Mrs. Horace Dobell has an interest irrespective of its merits. Foremost among the subjects discussed by Mrs. Dobell is that of the false estimate of women, and the part they play, taken by a woman herself—the authoress of "Young Mrs. Jardine." The facts brought forward and the arguments Mrs. Dobell has employed certainly tend to prove . . . that the authoress of "Young Mrs. Jardine" takes an altogether one-sided view of her own sex. . . . There is nothing more foolish than to condemn a whole class . . . and Mrs. Dobell's vigorous protest will, no doubt, emancipate not a few minds from the thralldom of its prejudiced misconceptions. . . .

As an example of Mrs. Dobell's style we will quote a passage, in which she lays bare the falsity of the assertion that women are "feeble, useless, half-educated, taught to believe that ignorance is amusing and helplessness attractive." She says:—"History has shown that a woman's natural nobility of nature has sometimes shone forth so brilliantly from the obscurity in which it is frequently veiled, that it could not be ignored, either by ignorance or envy. Not all the restrictions that man or circumstances had placed before them could always prevent women, when occasion required it, from coming gloriously to the front, to the rescue or assistance of others. This has happened from the time of the Bible to the present age—from the time of the courageous love of the mother of Moses, the filial affection of Ruth for Naomi, the noble, heroic devotion of Esther to oppressed and trampled-upon people, down to these 'latter days,' of which we have already spoken!"

A woman who stands up for her own noble sex against one-sided libellers deserves to be heard. Mrs. Dobell's work is interesting, as challenging unsound views of life.—*Court Circular*, November 13th, 1880.

This is a breezy, vigorous, and impetuous attack on women who run down their own sex. The writer takes up the glove thrown down by the detractors, and battles strenuously "*pro* women," selecting as her antagonist the authoress of "Young Mrs. Jardine." . . Mrs. Dobell dares her to mortal combat, and well does she handle her lance. It is refreshing to listen to the crisp, trenchant criticism . . and the book deserves to be an immense favourite with women-kind at large. She is as generous to the men as to the women, and shows . . that there is a preponderance of good over evil even in characters that are far from faultless. . . We have a series of shorter essays, besides "Tea-Table Talk" musings, memories, and criticisms . . all of which are boldly treated, affording as much pleasure as surprise to the reader.—*British Mail*, November 2nd, 1880.

The essayist's object is to controvert something that has been said to the disparagement of women by one of their own sex, the authoress of "Young Mrs. Jardine," who, in a spirit of censoriousness, has asserted that "women are feeble, useless, and half-educated, and taught to believe that ignorance is amusing and helplessness attractive." . . Of course, we should be, as the author's title has it, "*versus*" the woman who has said it.—*Daily News*, November 2nd, 1880.

One of the most curious books that the reader is likely to find.—*Morning Advertiser*.

One of the very oddest, if not the wisest essays we have ever read.—*Saturday Review*.

"*Versus a Woman, Pro Women*" is designed as a defence of women. It abounds in criticisms of the writings of lady novelists . . and there is an amount of originality about them that will afford amusement.—*Daily Chronicle*.

The chief part of this pungently written volume is taken up with a defence of women, and to some extent of the sterner sex. . . Mrs. Dobell finds in the recent novel entitled "Young Mrs. Jardine," by the authoress of "John Halifax," the following passages: "The man who has will to choose, courage to win, and faithfulness to keep, is almost unknown to modern chivalry; as rare, alas! as the woman who deserves to be so adored," and "Women are feeble, useless, half-educated; taught to believe that ignorance is amusing and helplessness attractive." It can hardly be wondered that a woman should be found to gird on her pen against such libels. . . Mrs. Dobell is quite justified in much that she says against the pessimist views of women so often taken by the authoress in question, and women generally will thank her for her vigorous defence of her sex, while the array she brings forward of women who have distinguished themselves of late in both public and private life is in itself sufficient to show that the sex can claim the possession of the highest virtues and excellences of humanity. . . The

authoress of "Young Mrs. Jardine" has laid herself open to many of the severe strictures Mrs. Dobell has inflicted on her. . . The miscellaneous articles, such as those on "Kleptomania," "False Judgments," "Novels," and "Servantgallism," are of a very readable character; that on "Servantgallism" is especially to be commended as touching on one of the great domestic grievances of modern life.—*Standard*, October 20th.

Following the chief essay, this volume also contained: "A Man's Thoughts about Men," "On Kleptomania," "On False Judgments and Impressions," "Evening Gossip about Novels," "Some Remarks about Servantgallism," "The Complaint from below Stairs," and "The Complaint from the Master in his Study" (in comic verse), "Concerning Solitude," "Tea-Table Talk," "Musings, Memories, and Criticisms," and "Hours of Lonely Meditation in the Picture Gallery of Memory," from which we have already quoted some specimens of graphic word-painting, at page 9.

After the publication of "*Versus a Woman, Pro Women*" Mrs. Dobell wrote the following squib in the *dialect of her native village*, which is too cleverly comic and good-naturedly satirical not to be quoted before leaving the subject:—

THE WAY WE LIVE NOW.

With apologies to Mrs. Trollope.

(*Supposed to be contributed by one Hodges, a Hertfordshire boörn!*)

"A duke will ride in a second-class railway carriage, and a duchess come down to breakfast in a linsey gown."—"YOUNG MRS. JARDINE."

I hits Stodges maäny hard blows,
For un desarves um, that I knows;
But if Stodges hits back agin,
I sez, sez I, 'tis a shaäme and a zin!

For that Missus Raikes (Craik) *she*
sez ut, you know,
And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo!

For who bees Stodges?—a hignorant
vool,
He doän't goo to charch and he doänt
goo to school;
He ain't got no larning, nor courage
nuther,
And t' Missus's more hignorant nor the
t'other!

For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut,
you know,
And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo!

For Stodges—he b'longs to the good old
times,

When folly and hignorance wurn't no
crimes—

He doänt write no letters, and t'books
never reads

But he drives t' oold plough and he zoes
t' tare zeeds.

For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut,
you know,

And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo!

The hoame that he's gotten he caän't
maäntain,

And his wife's rare zilly, voolish and
vain—

He caän't e'en gie un a round good
blow—

She thinks ut rare clevvur nothun' to
know,

For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut,
you know,

And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo!

And his chillun wull grow up arl the
zaäme,

Folly and zilliness *their* pooty gaäme—

What not to dew, mon, and what not to
zay,
'Tis all that they duz, mon, the whole
live day !

For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut,
you know,
And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo !

Noa ! they dunno what in t' world to doo—
Nar they dunno where in t' world to goo—
And they zits or they stroöls droo th'
vields all day,
Sometoimes o' this un—then that un
way !

For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut,
you know,
And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo !

When *they've* gotten money, oh ! doän't
they dress vine !
Nuthin' to remind un o' pigsties and
swine—

And in grand old halls goo merrily
around,
All to pianny or to viddle's merry
zound.

For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut,
you know,
And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo !

And doän't they live also on nice food
nuther !

Venison and jellies—one a patch on
t'other—

There's nuthin' too vine for their
stomachs, I'm thinkin',
And nuthin too prime for their throats
for drinkin.

For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut,
you know,
And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo !

And when un's in town, too, 'tis rare
good vun

To loäke at t' shops and the things in
un ;

And buy the vine dresses, mon, that you
zees there,

'Tis better, least, than gooing, mon, *you*
knows where !

For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut,
you know,
And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo !

And evun in travellun' if the zeats be
haärd,

There's the laäst penny nooz, or the
laäst c'rect caärd ;

And if um's squeezege close, why, it
doän't much matter,

For um all wears "linsey" and it caän't
get flatter !

For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut,
you know,

And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo !

For this is what duchesses wear, I'm told,
So it caän't hurt in crushing, if I may
maäke bold ;

And they ought'n much t' care, for it
ain't much cost,

And it doän't much show, when it's
crumpled and crossed.

For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut,
you know,

And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo !

Since our Missus' grey dresses be all
made t' hum,

There ain't no bills vor at Christmas to
cum ;

There woän't be no ribbons nor fal-lals
to pay vor,

And there woän't be no hoops, hurrah !
to make way vor.

For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut,
you know,

And it mun be true mon, if *she* sez zo !

'Tis a werry good toime for the pigs and
the asses,

'Tis a rare good toime for the crowds
and the masses,

With not no "linsey gowns," but all
velvet and silk 'uns,

Oh ! a rare good toime for the real
Charley Dylke uns !

For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut,
you know,

And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo !

For zum they be fat uns and zum they
 be thin,
 And zum they sticks out and zum they
 caves in;
 Zum looks loike our baäcon and zum
 poplar trees,
 And they doän't care for purtyness,
 that I zees!
 For that Missus Raikes, *she sez ut*,
 you know,
 And it mun be true, mon, if *she sez zo* !
 Duz *hurn* ride in zecond-class, or third-
 class mebbe,
 And thinks that's the way she proves
 she's a ledde—

And calls for a barrer that drives un
 on ends,
 When she gooes down to——sheer to
 zee t' oold friends!
 For that Missus Raikes, *she sez ut*,
 you know,
 And it mun be true, mon, if *she sez zo* !
 Dew they *arl* go bumping in they zecond
 classes—
 These vine young loärd's and their vine
 young lasses?
 Duz they wear no zatin and other vine
 dodges,
 Then—if *that be their vineness—why—*
I'd raythur be Hodges!

The author had reason to believe, when her subsequent works were published, that certain malicious attacks *made upon her personally*, rather than upon her works—attacks which appeared under the garb of “reviews”—emanated from the same hands as the similar attacks made upon her in reference to “*Versus a Woman, Pro Women.*” This perversion and degradation of what she considered to be the true and honourable function of the “reviewer” induced her to write many lashing satires on “False Critics” and “Mock Critics,” which further excited the ire of those at whom they were aimed. But while satirising and ridiculing the “pretenders,” the author has taken much pains to express her high appreciation of the value of true and impartial criticism of literary work, as distinguished from carping personal remarks about the authors themselves. The following may be given as a fair example of this:—

THE SPURIOUS CRITICS.

(A Supposed Fable of Gay's.)

Good sirs, when next you vent your spite,
 See your sarcasm is more bright;
 Go home and polish up your wit,
 It needs some polish, all admit.
 Your words have not the accents even
 Of truth, that first pure gift of heaven;
 You spoil even what you think you're
 praising.
 Sure, “Oireland” boasted your
 “upraising,”
 Or backwoods in the “Coloneese,”
 But scarce Old England, if you please!
 We scorn the meagreness, the air
 Of want of candour we see there,

Perchance ye bless some other shore,
 Ye Critics, *England's own no more!*
 O Critics of a day gone by,
 Of searching wit, of fearless eye,
 Ghosts of Macaulay, Croker, Hume,
 To wear your cloak some still assume,
 But are as like the ancient clan
 As apes, who dare assume the man;
 'Tis but a passing phase, we trust,
 Cowards there may be—will be—*must!*
 Bright are the critic-rays, but rare,
 And pass like meteors through the air;
 And those that oft assume the place,
 Are poor *pretenders* in the race—
 Are such a mockery of the letter,
 The sooner they are gone the better.
October, 1880.

CRITICS AND QUACKS.

(A Mistake.)

"Her aims are lofty . . . when not engaged in hoisting what she considers a malignant reviewer on his own petard."

The West Bromwich Free Press, May 8th, 1886.

Friend, let thine accusation even be met

At once; *never* "real" critic do I "hoist

On his own petard"—simply 'tis a "set"

Who do themselves upon the public foist

As "true reviewers," yet are simply those

Who, safe in hiding, merely are mean foes.

'Tis liars and slanderers whom I treat with scorn,

But these, good friends, *never reviewers* are;

If I the veil have from some features torn,

If I some false, *pretentious* brows would tar

With the tar-brush of ignominy—still, 'Tis not "reviewers" who have done

me ill,

But those who, meanly masked, before us come,

Pretending that they beat an honest drum.

Aye! I dare look to ye, my friends, for *praise*,

In that I do expose the *quacks*, who tread

With so much impudence the critics' ways,

Enraged at every true word of them said.

To what a multitude Of kindly critics do we not owe much Of pleasure;

Gladly we own the spirit sweet,

The thoughtful brain and the reflective mind,

That in *our many critics* we do find.

ABOUT AN OLD TRUMPET—
BLOWN AGAIN—IF FEEBLY.

There was a cry that once did sternly come

To many dwellers on earth's older land—

"'Tis best to leave untouched the Church of Rome,

Insult her neither by the lip, nor hand."

Again, a cry that echoed from the throne,

Whereon one saw a tyrant, evil-browed—

"'Tis best to leave our rulers, here, alone,"

A cry that angered and yet stilled the crowd

And let Corruption stalk beneath the sky,

Bearing with her what spoils her hand hath clutched;

And loud from crowded cities comes the cry—

"Leave, all of ye, our *Bumbledom* untouched."

Yes, still in countless places do we hear

That cry, if heard in many a varied tone;

That cry of meanness, vanity, and fear,

That cry, for all: "Leave *Criticism* alone!"

Leave Criticism alone (another form Of ancient threats), or fear the

coming storm;

To seek but to amend shall work thee ill,

And, therefore, victims of abuse, *be still!*

Mrs. Dobell was next persuaded by her physician (her husband) to go over the manuscripts of her poems which from her childhood upwards had been stored away, and to select such as she liked for publication. This resulted in the preparation of an octavo volume, published by Kegan Paul & Co., in the early part of 1881, which is thus described in the preface :—

“These poems were written under many vicissitudes, some only the other day, some in years gone by; some in a solitary room in an old Manor House, some in the green lanes of Hertfordshire and Surrey, some in the wide cornfields of Cambridgeshire, some by the seashore, and some, in the happiest of all places to the author, in a London library, by London lamp-light, surrounded by the roar of London life, and with the sweet companionship of a sympathetic fellow-worker.

“84, Harley Street, *December, 1880.*”

The title of this work was taken from the two first poems, written soon after her marriage, under the circumstances referred to at page 19, and includes some poems written as early as the age of ten, and also some composed while it was preparing for the press, but although it comprised 303 octavo pages, it represented but a minute portion of the rolls of manuscripts filled with the compositions of the poetess's early life, from some of which we have already quoted.

The reception which these poems received may to some extent be gleaned from the following extracts from the notices of the Press :—

It is easy to recognise in these very varied poems, some of which are graceful narratives, others spirited appeals, and others thoughtful reflections, the evidences of a refined and varied mental life. The verses abound in facile melody. . . . A body of refined and graceful poetry.—*Academy*.

The first thing that strikes the reader is the freedom from all whimsicality of manner. “Eveline” is a story of village life touchingly told. The interest of the narrative depends chiefly upon Mrs. Dobell's manner as a *raconteur*. There are many poems in the volume, all distinguished by high taste and sentiment.—*Overland Mail*.

Fresh, spirited, graceful . . . evince a gifted and deeply affectionate nature . . . sometimes interspersed with no little humour.—*Liverpool Albion*.

Wonderfully sweet, and written in scholarly fashion . . . contain quaint flashes of humour . . . There is a remarkable purity of tone. “The Fisherman” (lines for music) has the genuine ring about it which Gounod and Sullivan love so well.—*Gentleman's Magazine*.

But we must also give a few quotations from “Ethelstone” and from “Eveline.”

ETHELSTONE.

(Canto II.)

Far, in the calmest hour
 Of night, the clear, shrill piping of
 a bird,
 Resounding from some wreck of
 Roman power,
 Oft on the high surrounding hills is
 heard;
 For o'er the fallen warrior's buried
 crest,
 It builds its lonely, unmolested nest.

The statue from its niche
 Hath been dragged down and
 trampled in the dust;
 The brazen image, and the palace,
 rich
 With carving, left to rapine and to
 rust;
 These, and the rifled tomb and grass-
 grown fane,
 Are all that now of Roman pomp
 remain.

Rome, when her blood-stained
 hand
 The flag of death and victory
 unfurled
 Above the fair homes of some ravished
 land,
 Looked, spoke, and felt, the Con-
 queress of the World!
 The wreath of laurel binds no more
 her brow—
 Proud Empress, say, where are thy
 triumphs now?

Tread reverently—thy tread,
 O wanderer, is on her mighty dead;
 Yon wild flowers, with their bells of
 beauty hide
 The monument defaced, the column's
 pride.
 Men raised them there to tell a tale
 to us,
 Nor dreamed posterity would read it
 thus.

O mortal! if a boast
 Of human greatness e'er thy lip
 defiles,
 Remember Rome, her nation's con-
 quered host,
 Her noble cities, heaped in ruined
 piles;
 So learn humility—for here below,
 No wiser lesson human hearts may know.

ETHELSTONE.

(Canto IV.)

Fair hour of eve! by angels given
 To soothe the careworn sons of earth,
 When sunset leaves its glowing heaven
 To orbs of an inferior birth,
 And Labour, looking to the west,
 Sees that the wished-for hour has
 come,
 And, faint and weary, seeks the rest
 Found sweetest in a peasant's home.
 Thou purest balm to those that grieve
 O'er human weaknesses and crimes,
 Whose beauty woos the world to leave
 Its busy thoughts for fitter times.
 How often, at thy tranquil hour
 We feel the past arise again,
 So vividly as to o'erpower
 Each colder purpose of the brain,
 And seem to live once more in days,
 The brightest that we may have
 known,
 Made brighter by the magic rays
 That Memory throws around her own!

* * * * *

Far in the loveliness of a fair land,
 I buried the free soul, that once was
 stirred
 By feelings that can find no utterance
 here;
 So let it rest—forgotten, midst the
 flowers.
 But thou, who art a man, yet shaming
 not
 To weep the tears a woman can
 despise—
 Degenerate son of earth, why slumber
 thus,
 Forgetful of the mission of thy youth?

From "Eveline" we may quote EVELINE'S LETTER:—

Once more I write to thee, alas! once more

I pray for pity vainly asked before;
My heart is weary of its violence,
I now am calm and even resigned,
and hence

I trace these lines, that in my altered mood

Their words may touch thee and be understood.

Thine image is beside me still, and nought

Can drive it hence, though bright and pure no more;

Yet I will own to thee that I have thought

I judged too kindly of thy heart before.

It was not well of thee to leave me thus,

Nor by my shame and frightful anguish moved;

O! that the cold grave had divided us,
And not thy colder heart, my still beloved.

And yet I write not to reproach, nay, I
Have often thought it sweeter far to die

Than live to loathe thy memory and thy name;

'Tis I, not thou, that have been most to blame.

But, abject in my misery, I implore
That thou wilt write to me one little line,

One word of gentleness; I ask no more,

'Twere useless to demand what once was mine—

Thy heart's fond love; I know that this is lost;

I, that once deemed it of myself a part—

Ah! words can never tell thee what it cost

To tear that fond delusion from my heart.

EVELINE'S PRAYER.

I thank thee, O my God,
That Thou hast breathed upon my heart again,
And turned away the reckless steps that trod
The downward path, from whence return is vain.

It was but now I prayed
That Thou would'st end my sorrow and my sin;
Despair my heart so wild and hardened made,
I dreaded life, and saw no hope therein.

My head was bowed with shame,
I dared not lift from earth my heavy eyes,
I even feared to call upon Thy name,
Lest Thou Thy guilty suppliant should despise.

O pity and forgive
The heart that knew Thee not except through fear,
And hear the voice that now implores to live,
That it may yet perform its mission here.

My Father, if Thou wilt,
Chastise me heavily—Thy will be done.
But, ah! let not my error and my guilt
Fall on the fair head of my little one.

I ask Thee but for this,
Not selfishly before Thee now I kneel,
Imploring not my faded youth, or bliss,
Or praying Thee my broken heart to heal.

No, but with burning tears
And supplicating hands entreating
Thee,
That I may guard my infant's future
years,
And save her from the fate that
mine must be.

My God! my God! I hear
Thy awful voice from the vast
heavens reply;
It falls like thunder on my mortal
ear—
Thou dost refuse my prayer—Then
let me die!

Thou say'st I am unfit—
Dishonoured, stained and lost—for
such a task;
I know Thee wise, yet can I not
submit,
'Tis mercy and not justice that I ask.

EVELINE'S SONG TO HER INFANT.

Lullaby, lullaby,
Dear one, rest;
Pillow thy head on my yearning
breast,
For never, oh! never, shall sleep like
this
Revisit thine eyes in after years;
The fond, warm touch of thy mother's
kiss
Will have changed, on thy tender
cheek, to tears.

Lullaby, lullaby,
Soft and deep
Falleth the shade of thy infant sleep,
Like a veil that a summer evening
throws
On the tranquil brow of the parting
day;
So deepens the calm of thy pure
repose,
Till the light of thy face hath passed
away.

Lullaby, lullaby,
Ne'er below
Shall thy mother again such slumber
know,
Or the holiness of a peace like thine,
Return to her worn and weary brain;
Thy dreams are the dreams of Eden;
mine
Are but the echoes of waking
pain.

Lullaby, lullaby,
Yet no more
From the mercy of Heaven my lips
implore,
Than to guard from thy sweet young
life the blight
On the guilty brow of thy mother
cast;
'Tis the prayer that I breathe by day,
by night,
'Tis the prayer that in death will be
fondest—last!

At page 17 we have quoted from a poem written when the young poetess was 17, to show the ideas she had then received from her student lover as to the proper sphere of the "Good Physician's" ambitions, and we may well quote here a poem written in 1880, after thirty-five years' experience of the physician's actual life, to show how far these early aspirations had been realised:—

TO DR. —.

They listen for his footsteps on the
stairs,
To them distinct through all the
city's hum,

Hushing their painful sighs, heart-
broken prayers,
To count those footfalls as they
nearer come.

And sadly, as he bends above the bed,
 They wait for words of comfort from
 his lips ;
 Death shuts the fatal wings so darkly
 spread,
 And life smiles out behind her black
 eclipse.

His soothing hand relieves the racking
 pain,
 Wipes the cold death-damp from
 the haggard face,
 Brings hope and peace to the o'er-
 troubled brain,
 And stays pale Death in his too
 rapid pace.

No wonder that they bless him as he
 leaves
 The darkened bedroom and its
 fevered air,

The saddened brow, the bitter heart
 that grieves,
 Are happier, better for his presence
 there.

Ever serene and calm himself, he
 goes,
 Heedless of place and time, where
 duty calls ;
 Be it to soothe the mightiest
 monarch's woes,
 Or suffering penury in prison walls.

He, too, has suffered, though his brow
 is calm,
 Grief, sickness, pain, are not to him
 unknown ;
 But he, from whom so many seek
 their balm,
 Seeks from on High the solace for
 his own.

These thoughts were felt to describe so well the " Good Physician " in his daily life, that they were copied into the *British Medical Journal*.

In encouraging his wife to undertake these literary labours, her physician had a double object, first, as we have said, to assist in bringing back the lost memory by a sort of mental gymnastics, and gradually to awaken the old interest in human affairs, so vivid before her illness. But a still more anxious object was, to divert the awakening mind and feelings from the " dread of some dark day unknown to thee," which he alone knew that the future held for mother and child, and the shock of which he feared might again unhinge the only partially recovered nervous system of his patient.

After the birth of her second child, Violet, who, before her marriage to Dr. Tidy, had been her mother's chief and devoted nurse and companion during her long illness, and her father's chief and confidential comforter throughout those years of anxiety and sorrow, did not recover her usual health, and the terrible discovery was made that she was beginning to develop an insidious, but incurable, internal disease. The real truth of its hopelessness was sedulously concealed, as long as possible, from both mother and child, in order that they might be the better able to sustain each other's cheerfulness through the long and painful illness which was seen to be inevitable, knowing well that the

heart-breaking truth must reveal itself only too soon by the steady decline of strength and the increase of suffering. Through more than three years of deepening anxiety and sorrow the mother endeavoured by her devoted love to return that of her child. To bring her hope, and pleasure when hope was vain, to earn the love of her two little children, in preparation for the dreaded day, were the never-ceasing occupations of the mother's thoughts, while, with angelic self-control, the poor girl always kept her worst sufferings from her mother, never losing sight of the fear lest sorrow might bring back her mother's illness.

About 1880 were written the lines headed "The Mother and Her Three Daughters," which refer first to her eldest daughter's first voyage, then to the second's commencing illness, and lastly to the third's happy home:—

THE MOTHER AND HER THREE DAUGHTERS.

O'er the dark waters of the stormy
bay,

With straining eyes, and pallid,
parting lips,

She sees the fluttering pennants fade
away

Of one of Albion's noble, home-
built ships.

She sees, with sad, prophetic eyes, the
flash

Of lightning, as it gilds the crowded
deck,

She hears the deafening thunder, the
fierce dash

Of seething waters through the
groaning wreck.

Trembling she turns away her inward
gaze

From all sad *visions* of her far-off
child,

And seeks near home for calmer,
brighter days,

For hopes more peaceful, and for
skies less wild.

There bends a face that she can ne'er
forget,

Pure as the snowdrop, sweet as
"Violet,"

Whose ear lists ever to another's moan,
Forgetful of all echoes of her own.

A brow of pallor, oft of bitter pain,
Yet one whose heart is in another's
woes,

With lips that bless, or praise, but
ne'er complain,

With angel footsteps through the
world she goes.

Another by an English hearth I see,
A face all glowing with a mother's
joy,

Watching the pretty gambols on her
knee,

The rippling laughter of her noble
boy.

She hath, as yet, a calm, untroubled
lot,

Untouched by stern despair, un-
stained by tears;

And yet we dare not, on earth's
changeeful spot,

Foretell the sunshine of our unborn
years.

Scan not with sad, or with prophetic
eyes

The dawn of an anticipated day;

Ah! seek not to predict life's future
skies,

But calmly, still look forward, hope
and pray.

But the first *expressed* recognition of the approaching great sorrow may be traced in the following lines. They were written on arriving late one lovely evening at Bournemouth, on a flying visit with her husband, in search of a house and grounds to which she tried to hope they might *yet take their poor child for change*; or, failing this, to which that child's little son and daughter might be carried, to keep their thoughts from the gloom at home. She was charmed with the place, and the circumstances brought back memories of similar visits in days gone by in search of change for her own little ones after illness, as evinced by the following lines:—

BY THE WHITE CLIFFS.

O! little hands and little feet,
I see them through the blinding
tears,

O! little voices, soft and sweet,
I hear them through the roll of
years.

The tiny white and trembling hands
That tell of sickness and of pain;
Filled with the treasures of the
sands—

How memory brings them back
again!

I see them wandering, side by side,
Those treasured loves of early days,
They come again at eventide,

With all their pretty, childish ways;
And sweet it is awhile to dwell
Apart from life's too busy hum,
Wrapt in the sad and tender spell
Of sorrows past, of joys to come.

Thou pine-girt place—how calm thou
art;

The moon that shimmers through
thy trees

Seems of thy woods a very part,
When parted by the wild sea-breeze ;

Not even the boatman's carol rude
Thy sleeping echoes bear along—
Thou art the very solitude
For lovers' sighs and poet's song.

White cliffs that breast the ocean
wave,

Fringed with dark shades of birch
and pine,

Bright stars that light the pirate's
cave,

And through their gloomy branches
shine ;

Flag of the yacht, or idler's sail
That gently flaps the dying gale,
Across the darkness ye return,
Like visions—mournful, but not stern.

Away! for busy life is near,
Whose constant murmur thrills mine
ear ;

It is the world—the world of strife—
It is the voice of eager life.

Give not to grief, to vain regret,
The moments that are granted yet ;
There still is work that may be done,
There still are victories to be won.

Bournemouth,
September, 1880.

In the same month was written—

TREASURED MEMORIES.

O ye past days, so anxious yet so dear,
Full of a countless list of tender
stories,

With shifting lights of hope, of joy, of
fear,

I would not change ye for a world
of glories.

Our little ones—across the chequered
past

I see their tiny figures gaily flit,
Fair human memories that the longest
last,
Gay with the pretty laugh of childish
wit.

I care but little what the dull world
seems,
It costs no pang its trivial ties to
sever,
So that mine early loves come back
in dreams—
Bright sunlit joys that will be joys
for ever.

No envy, with its sharp, envenomed
stings,
No hateful spite can this sweet
past destroy,
For memory hath a world of gracious
things
The vilest tongue is powerless to
destroy.

They cannot hush the gentle, tender
voices,
With all their merry laughter—
infant cries;

There is no human spell my heart
rejoices,
Like the sweet spell of childhood's
mystic eyes.

There may lie grander treasure at our
feet,
And wealth or glory be within our
call;
And friends may flatter, flattery is
sweet!
But one dear, childish lisp outweighs
them all.

One childish lisp—*Mamma*; no angel
tone
Can thrill the heart as that one tone
can thrill,
That little word—that one—is all mine
own,
Its first soft accents are remembered
still.

And oh! I pity with a thousand pities
Those who in such sweet music have
no part;
Not for the treasures of Ind's fabled
cities,
Would I yield up these treasures of
my heart.

Late in 1880 we have "Lines to —," which show that in her inmost thoughts, though never on her lips, the coming end of the life of her darling child was recognised:—

Far more of heaven than earth, my
own, shines in thy calm and placid
eyes,
Though thou hast yet the warmest love
for all our earthly loves and ties,
And yet there is a look, resigned, even
in the hours of bitterest pain,
And few a peace so pure as thine can
ever in this world attain.

Thy gentleness, thy calm submission,
more of heavenly grace have
taught
Than all the wisest sermons teach, or
all by sore experience brought;
The peace of heaven is in thine eyes,
so beautifully soft and clear,
And even the accents of thy voice seem
almost heavenly to mine ear.

God is with thee, my darling, I can
 read it on thy gentle brow,
 O! if I ever trusted Heaven, I know
 my trust is in Him now.
 Thy pure and sinless life hath been a
 noble lesson to us all,
 Let those who think their footsteps firm
 take wiser heed for fear they fall,

For they may boast their sinless lives,
 yet there are few can live as
 thou,
 While racking pain thy frame
 disturbs, *but not the patience on
 thy brow.*

The truth of the mother's words was confirmed by Canon Gregory, who was a frequent and most gratefully appreciated visitor to the invalid throughout her illness. She did not conceal from him that she differed from some of his views, and they often discussed their differences. In a letter referring to these interviews, after her death, he said, "*Every visit to her was a beautiful lesson.*"

Still straining for a ray of hope, and seeking to cheer her child—in May, 1881, the mother sent her the following lines:—

God is with thee, my darling, thou art
 brave,
 With all the bravery of a noble
 breast;
 The God Who takes away, the God
 Who gave,
 Is One on Whom thy trust will ever
 rest.

God is with thee, my darling, we will
 still
 Look forward to a calmer, happier
 day,
 When yet shall pass from thee this
 load of ill;
 For this at morn, at noon, at night
 we pray.

To hear that thou hast rested, smiled,
 or slept,
 Is still our constant thought, by
 night, by day;
 All other troubles, once so sadly wept,
 Are lost in this one thought, or
 passed away.

O, let no trouble thy pure breast
 disturb,
 There yet may dawn bright days of
 calm and peace;
 I, too, all tumult of my heart will curb,
 And bid my restless, mourning
 thoughts to cease.

A visit about this time to a former residence called forth the following, "Loved Memories":—

'Twas here that her small footsteps
 used to stray,
 In the first coolness of an autumn day,
 To gather damask roses, whose sweet
 heads
 Hung, in the cold winds, on their
 frosted beds.

And here, where snows of winter lay
 so deep,
 Her hand of pity scattered crumbs to
 keep
 The birds of summer through the
 wintry days,
 Till April's sun should rise, with
 warmer rays.

Here was her little garden, here she
grew
Hepaticas of pink, or tender blue,
And lilies of the tallest—always white,
Auriculas and Bethlehem "stars of
night."

Ah! little garden, I no more can tread
Thy moss-grown paths, on which the
roses shed
Their pallid leaves, as summer days
depart;
So fare thee well—thy memories wring
my heart.

But hope was vain. "That dark day," which had been so long foreshadowed with a silent dread, at last was realised. Many poems written in the next few years are its chronicles, from which we can only find space for two or three extracts:—

THE WORLD'S LOSS.

(A heart-broken cry. In Memoriam.)

The world hath lost a saint—
A light hath passed from earth, and
sky, and sea;
And, looking upward, dizzy, sick, and
faint,
We marvel why so cruel a loss
should be.

We spare her ill;
To us there is none other, on this
earth,
A place so rarely sanctified to fill,
To bless, as she hath blessed it,
from her birth.

O God! the task is hard,
To read Thy kindness in so stern
a blow;
Love's tender flesh full bitterly is
scarred;
The marks remain for ever here
below.

Beloved and wept by all,
Purest and best of all the earth's
sweet flowers;
Ah me! the Hand seems cruel that
could recall
A joy that we had looked upon as
ours.

Only—Thou knowest best;
She may be happier in that world
of Thine,
Where all are with eternal freedom
blessed,
Loosed from the bonds of which we
here repine.

But yet—we have so few
Like her, to brighten up this world
of pain;
And life is a dull moor, or desert view,
Where we may search for her, and
search in vain.

The world is bleak and drear,
The bravest even shudder and
despond;
The bright go home and leave us
weeping here—
Ah! well for us there is a world
beyond.

Hope is the only cheer,
The only brightness in this gloomy
sky;
And oft, to us, the hour most fair, most
dear,
Is that, when weary, we lie down to
die.

HOLY PATIENCE.

So earth hath lost an angel! Thou
hast passed

Into the realms of everlasting peace;
Thy bitter foe hath lost all power at
last,

The throes of unrelenting pain now
cease.

A lesson full of reverence hast thou
taught,

By thy sweet calm, thy patience deep
and wide;

But, ah! a lesson with such anguish
fraught,

Would I, ere I had learned it thus,
had died!

Thus patient wert thou from thy
earliest years,

Through all the hours of pain thy
life hath run;

Grief hath been thine, but never
selfish tears,

The world can spare thee ill thou
gentle one.

Yes, patience such as thine is rare
below,

Nor often sanctifies our human race;

And few thus meekly bear the cross
of woe,

That marked, alas! how early, thy
sweet face.

O! one like thee we shall not meet
again,

With eyes so soft and gentle in their
pleading,

And grateful in the very midst of pain,
For the sad cares thy suffering state
was needing.

So perfect in thy womanhood—so
calm,

Thy mind replete with full and
noble thought;

And something sweet, and as the very
balm

Of holiness, thy presence ever
brought.

All things by Heaven created had to
thee

An ever-deepening interest, all
thine own,

Even to the habits of the bird and
bee;

And thou could'st read a "sermon in
a stone." *

And all things Heaven had sent upon
this earth

Some portion of their lives to thee
could give,

Some interest in their progress, in
their worth,

The wherefore they should die, the
wherefore live.

Yet hast thou left us! gentle, loving,
wise,

By all who knew thee mourned for
and beloved;

Thou hast forsaken us for holier skies,
Wept for on earth, and by thy God
approved!

BELOVED AND LOST.

She lived upon the borderland of
saints,

The land that is so circumscribed on
earth,

The land that mortal feebly paints,
Where selfish thoughts and cravings
have no birth.

Her voice was tender as the soft west
wind,

Touching each early bud with
loving touch;

Though wisdom with compassion was
combined,

Her large heart felt for all, aye, felt
too much.

* Violet showed an especial aptitude for and interest in the study of geology.

Her eyes were blue, with twilight's
softest blue,
For o'er the brightness was a pensive
shade;
Her gentle heart knew—more than
others knew—
How sorrow should be met and pain
allayed.

RETURNED TO HEAVEN.

Thou wert my favourite, and none
thought it wrong,
For thou wert loved of all, thou
heart of gold;
Thou wert so merciful, withal so
strong,
All saw thee calm, none ever called
thee *cold*.
Thou wert so mindful of all others'
woes,
In all times so considerate in thy
ways;
Ah, so unselfish! and yet not of those
Who air their charities for others'
praise.

Yes, so forgiving, with no mock
pretence
Of figuring as a saint, for which
some strain,
And always full of such calm, whole-
some sense,
In nothing ever selfish, careless,
vain.

Gentle and sweet, yet with a lofty
brain
That comprehended much and was
too deep,
Too wise, too broadly thoughtful to be
vain;
One whose sweet memory love must
ever weep.

Ah! wherefore did'st thou leave us,
save that earth
Was scarce a dwelling for a soul so
sweet;
Too pure, too holy, from its earliest
birth,
To walk, o'er long, this world of
weary feet.

It had long been arranged that when the dreaded day came the two little children, Zoë and Harry, should be taken over to 84, Harley Street, at once, before they knew their loss. Thither also, at nightfall, in the first paroxysm of his grief, their father rushed for consolation, and for more than a year *there* they all stayed.

To try to fill the dreadful chasm that had been reft in their young lives, and in that of their father, now occupied all the time and thoughts of the poetess. To her was allotted the sad task of telling the little ones that they were motherless, and when the fitting opportunity occurred they were told "she was too sweet and good to be allowed to suffer any longer, and the angels have taken her to their homes in the skies, where they will make her well and happy, and there she will watch over you till you are old enough to go to her."

From time to time, during the next year, they were taken to the new home that Dr. Dobell had been forming at Bournemouth; then back to Harley Street, for not yet had their father dared to live again in his own beautiful house in Mandeville Place, filled with the treasures collected to give pleasure to the lost one, but now peopled only by memories of the last three years of suffering and deepening sorrow.

At last the move was obliged to be made, and under the devoted care

of Miss Cowdery, who skilfully and tenderly nursed their mother through the worst part of her illness, and who, at her request, had remained to take charge of the children until they should be old enough to go to school, they returned with their father to Mandeville Place, and, in 1883, *Dr. and Mrs. Dobell left London for ever*. This was afterwards referred to in a professional journal in these words: "Dr. Dobell, who had attained a position in the foremost rank of London consulting physicians, suddenly left the Metropolis and took up his residence at Bournemouth, in consequence of a great domestic bereavement, which had rendered the associations of London society unbearable to his wife and himself." Or, as Dr. Dobell said in his work on the "Medical Aspects of Bournemouth" (Second Edition, 1886): "We fled to our Bournemouth home to spend the rest of our lives amidst new thoughts, new scenes, and new spheres of work. The calm and beauty of the neighbourhood were so delightful that when summer came we felt no inducement to go to any other place for a holiday."

The sad tale of their bereavement is briefly told on a monumental tablet beneath a fresco emblematical of the Christian virtues, which decorates the sacrarium of the beautiful church of St. Peter's, Bournemouth. "Given by Dr. and Mrs. Horace Dobell in loving memory of their second daughter, Violet Fordham, wife of Dr. Charles Meymott Tidy, who died in London, July 29th, 1881, after a protracted and painful illness, borne with angelic patience in Christian faith."

At Bournemouth everything was done to give delight to the young children on their visits. There were their little gardens, tended for them in their absence by the poetess; there were their pet pigeons, their guinea-pigs, their squirrels, their dolls' houses, their toy cupboards, their games for out of doors or in, their picture books, their special rooms. Here in summer were their gipsy teas in the woods; here in winter they were amused by the endless collections of stories which their grandmamma could always invent, or recollect. From girlhood she had been a special pet with children, for whom she could find never-failing sources of amusement out of her own brains. Nursery rhymes were written in their absence, in readiness for those coveted days "when the children were coming." These rhymes, of which we quote a few, were afterwards published as the eighteenth volume of "In the Watches of the Night."

MANY VOICES.

Our dogs and foxes bark, for they don't
know how to speak;
The little robins sing, but the mice
can only squeak;

The tiny flies in summer buzz—the
bigger beetles hum,
While fishes, whether small or large
as *all declare*, are dumb.

The gentle cow will moo, while the
bull delights to bellow,
For he is loud of voice, you know, and
such a restless fellow;
The larks are fond of singing in the
beautiful blue sky,
While the cornrake in the barley hath
a strange and mournful cry.

You hear the piggies in the farmyard
make a horrid *squeal*,
That frequently reminds one of the
grating of a wheel;
The cat, when not engaged in hunting,
hath a pretty purr,
Unless you chance to stroke her skin
the wrong way of her fur!

The mischief-loving magpies are very
fond of chatter,
Especially when something to alarm
them is the matter,
When, if you look about you, it is
likely you will see
That cruel thief, the cat, is slyly
creeping up the tree!

Our donkeys startle by their bray, the
baa-lambs loudly bleat,
Though all are very silent when they
have enough to eat;
The bird will sing its sweetest note
when sitting by its nest,
And of all the sounds I speak of here,
I think that *quite* the best!

Although the little motherless children always had the first place,
plenty of room was found in the heart and home for any of the little
ones now springing up in the London home of the youngest daughter. To
the elder of these the following lines were written:—

* * * * *
O Philip, gentle as thou art,
And full of pretty, childish ways,
Who can foretell what brilliant part
Thy wits may play in future days?

For me—my hopes are bright and high
Of what may be in life's estate,
Although I dare not prophesy,
I yet *believe* thy future great.

At least *this* prophecy is mine—
Whate'er may try thy youthful heart,
Yet, in the days that may be thine,
Thou wilt but play a noble part;

That never grief, or shame's sad tears
Shall cloud the sunshine of thy
years,
But noble deeds and noble worth
Shall make thy glorious crown on earth.

And the following are from lines to the eldest son of the daughter,
then in New Zealand, who was born at 84, Harley Street:—

TO RONALD.

My Ronald—fearless little boy,
Thy father's pride, thy mother's joy—
What are thy little fingers doing,
What are thy little steps pursuing?

* * * * *
I hear those feet, so strangely bold,
Have often through the forest strolled,

To gather wild flowers sweet and
bright,
To deck thy mother's room at night.

The day may never dawn for me,
When I thy face, my boy, may see,
But often still my thoughts shall stray
To thy wild home so far away.

No event in the life of the poetess had so great an influence on her works as this removal to Bournemouth. Always an ardent lover of the country, as told in many a page of her girlhood's poems, yet for thirty-two years taking her place in "London society," and when not actually incapacitated by illness, fully occupying that place, she now returned to the country with delight. Thus she exclaims ("In the Watches of the Night") :—

Oh! in the calm, the wonderful sweet
calm
Of these old woods, that seem so
strangely far
From turmoil and from grief—that
have a balm
To heal the wounded soul—and where
the star
Of evening looks into uplifted eyes,
And where the deep roar of earth's
cities dies :

Aye! in these lonely woods we think
of spheres
That shall be far more beautiful than
ours ;
Where love may reign, where there
shall be no tears,
And where shall be no wars of evil
powers,

And again—

* * * * *
Sweet days, fair days ; and if a cloud
of care
Seems sometimes on her widest plains
to rest,
To even *know* that earth can be so fair

Where fruits shall ripen and where
flowers shall grow,
Where summer smiles—where there is
never woe.

Oh! shall we meet our dear ones there
once more,
To look back on this earth as sad
dreams past?

Full grateful that their bitterness is
o'er,
That rest for troubled souls is found at
last.

Rest, rest, and rest with God—and
this, we trust
Shall be the new birth from our mortal
dust.

Is to be one of those whom she hath
blessed ;
Oh! sorrow and pain's bitter "after-
blast"
Shall never make forgotten life's sweet
past.

Her husband had always been so deeply impressed by the knowledge that the very heart of her life's prime—those years which might have been the happiest of all—had been distracted and spoilt by illness, suffering, and sorrow (see *ante*), that he determined to devote the rest of his life—now emancipated from the work of London practice—to trying, by every possible means, to bring her such happiness that the *brightness of the present might obliterate the dark memories of the past*.

Under his advice she determined not to return to that place on the 'Social Treadmill' which her long illness had compelled her to resign.

and in future to confine her "society" to her family and old friends. The complete calm of their new home, referred to in the above lines, within sound of the sea, looking out upon a lawn, surrounded by tall trees of pine, silver birch, sycamore, chestnuts, and evergreen oaks, screened by deep hedges of rhododendrons, arbutus, laurel, and bay, and from its well-chosen site, commanding views of both sunrise and sunset, and of those lovely "Italian moonlights" for which Bournemouth is distinguished—this was exactly what both heart and mind had craved for, after all that had passed in the last twelve years of sickness, anxiety, and grief. It had a marvellous effect in restoring both physical and nervous health.

They had built a little picture gallery, to receive some of the treasures collected in Harley Street (see Plate VIII.), and in this house, surrounded by pictures, books, flowers, and birds, in the intervals between the visits of "the children," who now called it "their country home," and of their parents, and a few chosen friends of old—she worked indefatigably at composition and preparing for the press, as the best means of keeping away dreaded recollections. Many of these poems glow with gratitude for the return of health and peace, while they tell how great had been their need. Thus, we have recollections of illness:—

AH! GOD OF MERCY, I AM
FREE.

Thou hast been my companion many
years,

O pain! thy left hand pressing on
my heart;

Thou wert regardless of my grief and
tears,

Thy right hand ever ready with thy
dart.

Thou wert with me through the long
hours of night,

Bending as a dark shadow from the
skies;

And when I sought to see the pale
starlight,

A mask of iron was laid upon mine
eyes.

And when I strove to think, my
thoughts would stray

Into strange regions, filled with
ghostly shapes,*

As one who strains to find a sweeter way,
But only by the gate of death
escapes.

And if I sought to pray, my tongue
would cleave

Even to my mouth, for *thou wert
standing by,*

Nor yet my moaning bedside would'st
thou leave,

Nor even let thy weary captive die.

So did I wait and weep, as time went
past,

I seemed to have no friends *but one*
—and Thee;

Ah! God of Mercy, I am free at last—
Thy hands my bonds have broken—
I am free!

* See pp. 23, 24.

Again, we have—

THANKSGIVINGS.

I thank Thee, O my God, for the
sweet hours
Spent on the shores of Thy most
wondrous sea,
For the sweet fragrance of Thine
earthly flowers,
For the fair song of bird from grove,
from tree.

I thank Thee for this beauty, far and
wide,
This glory—filling all broad plains
of Thine;
The oaks and elms that clothe the
fair hill-side,
The groves of peaceful and of
pensive pine.

I thank Thee that I live to love these
things,
These wonders that Thou hast
created here;
And even to hear the nightingale that
sings
In Thy calm twilight—sings and
knows no fear.

I thank Thee that I live to see the
light,
The glorious sunlight of Thy
boundless skies;
And for the planets of Thy calmer
night,
That shine down into mine adoring
eyes;

I thank Thee that I live to see Thy
glory
Upon the ocean, even as on the
land;
To feel that there can be no grander
story
Than that of the creations of Thy
hand.

That all things Thou hast fashioned
are for man,
And that I, even, am one in Thy great
plan,
Whom Thou hast made, as from the
very sod—
For all this do I praise Thee, mighty
God.

Many fine passages are addressed to the sea, and to its surroundings,
thus—

* * * * *
O'er yonder fretful deep
The light of countless planets hath
been shed;
Their tragic legends still the billows
keep,
Nor whisper of the dead.

They tell not to our ears
A tale of passing time, of coming
doom;
The mysteries of a million rolling years
Lie silent in *that* tomb.

So on the smooth sea sands,
Beneath the angry storms of earthly
skies,
We lift to Heaven our mute and help-
less hands,
Our sad and blinded eyes.

O sea of unknown ages,
Thy secrets never shall be here
revealed!
So shall the records of thy myriad
pages,
Be as a book unsealed.

O never-sleeping waves!
 I weary of your hollow, ceaseless
 moans,
 Lamenting ever over unseen graves,
 Built with primeval stones.

Thou world of restless thought,
 Say! wilt thou ever find repose at
 last?
 Or will all lessons that the heavens
 have taught
 Die—with the dying blast?

Again—

THE WORLD OF WATERS.

'Tis strange to look out on a world of
 waters,
 To know it spreads for thousand
 miles away,
 That countless of the earth's lost sons
 and daughters
 Lie silently in cavern, gulf, or bay;
 That side by side, in depths unknown,
 may sleep
 Those, foreign both by country and
 by name,
 Yet rest together calmly in the deep,
 Some good or great—some stained
 by bitter shame.
 Nor tomb, nor churchyard there shall
 be apart,
 For monarch, subject, pauper, or
 for slave;
 The brow of glorious bays, the broken
 heart,
 All slumber in one undistinguished
 grave.
 Pale corpses from a hundred differing
 lands,
 Pale corpses from a thousand
 differing hearths;
 O'er whom no gifts are strewn by
 loving hands,
 Round whose rude tombs there wind
 no trodden paths.

* * * * *

Hush! there may come a time
 For peace and joy, as well as times
 to weep,
 And rest may therein dwell, complete,
 sublime,
 Even on thy waves, O deep!

Hush! there may be a realm
 Where lightning shall not burn, nor
 death affright;
 Where winds shall not uproot, nor
 storms o'erwhelm,
 And where—*there shall be*
light.

THE SLEEPLESS VOICE.

Hopeless and dreary sound the billows
 wild,
 Lifting their white heads to the
 stormy sky;
 And where, till now, both youth and
 beauty smiled,
 They gladly lay their burden down
 and die.
 O foaming water, wilt thou *never* rest!
 Is there *no* pause in thine impetuous
 race?
 But fronting, still, despair with angry
 breast,
 And baring to the storm thy livid
 face!

LIGHT UPON THE SEA.

O thou fair star! whose tender rays
 have kissed
 The drifting outlines of the ocean
 mist—
 How often I have watched thy steady
 light
 Illumine the dark shadows of the
 night!
 The sages of this earth can not divine
 The many mighty secrets that are thine,
 So jealously protected in thy march
 Through heaven's magnificent and
 silent arch!

Even with our boasted wisdom we yet
know
Of thee but little in our paths below ;
Thou art a mystery, O thou star—and
still
A mystery shalt remain, by Heaven's
own will.

How softly dost thou shine upon the
waves !
And, knowing every secret of the caves,
And every *rendezvous* of wildest
shores,
Thy bright ray hundreds of strange
haunts explores !

The centuries come and go, and we
remain
But as a moment on earth's shifting
plain ;
Thou art for ever here, and yet, no
less,
Thy secrets never mortals shall
possess !

THE UNFURLING OF THE FLAG.*

O Flag ! whose colours, nobly won,
Have governed for a thousand years
The seas, where many an English son
Lies buried—wept with England's
tears,
How gaily, as thy sailors shout,
Thy unstained length is floating out !

Ah ! flag of many a boastful story
Beneath our native British skies ;
Ah ! flag of honour and of glory,
How often fanned by widows' sighs !
Yet, oh ! float out upon the breeze !
We shame thee with such thoughts as
these !

That pure and stainless length hath
waved
Where sea of unknown fathoms
rages,
On rudest rock *thy* name engraved
Will tell a tale to unborn ages ;
Fearless of storm and angry blast,
For ever shall thy glory last !

O flag ! of conquest and of death—
O flag ! whose records are of
slaughter—
Thy sailors with their dying breath
Will shout thy victories o'er the
water !
Float out—where'er the storms are
high,
We win the fight for thee—or die !

Our sons will ever tell with pride
How, hand to hand, their fathers
stood,
And fell together—side by side,
Nor wailed the loss of noble blood ;
Float out, float out, o'er England's
sea—
They slumber well who die for thee !

At the strong recommendation of the publishers and libraries, just before leaving London she had commenced her first three-volume prose work of fiction ; and soon after removing to Bournemouth she published "Dark Pages ; or, The Secrets of an Old Bureau" (Remington, 1882). The following passages from some of the reviews will show that this was well received :—

DARK PAGES.

(Opinions of the Press.)

She has the art of telling a story very well. . . . She can describe a good plot, can sketch interesting and even thrilling incidents. . . . They are eminently readable.—*Scotsman*.

* On seeing a new flag unfurled at Bournemouth. These words ought to be set to music.

Very considerable power is displayed. . . Each of the three narratives has its ghastly and ghostly burden. . . The style is beyond the average of our lady novelists. . . Calculated to rivet the attention of her readers.—*Academy*.

There is force in every one of these three tales; there is genuine descriptive power.—*Spectator*.

There is a horrible attractiveness about the romance. . . This episode is introduced with considerable instance . . is both well told and calculated to arouse the reader's curiosity. There is an element of pathos in the unfortunate Katrine's misplaced attachment.—*Morning Post*.

A capital book, worth "Dobell" (double) the money.—*Judy*.

There is a strong dramatic idea in the concluding part of the story.—*Daily Telegraph*.

Nevertheless, she did not take keenly to prose; and before "Dark Pages" were dry from the press she was again deep in poetry, and had made considerable headway with "In the Watches of the Night," of which eighteen volumes were eventually published between 1884 and 1888, containing 1,632 separate poems.

Her rapidity and promptitude in composition were always extraordinary; and her husband says that he never could make out *when* she composed; for although they were always together, except when he was professionally engaged, and they always worked together at night, whenever he looked at what she was writing, or asked suddenly what she was doing, she was always "copying" or "revising for the press," never composing!

As an example of this promptitude and rapidity may be mentioned the composition of her well-known lines on the death of Gordon.

She was out in the carriage with her husband as usual, and, after attending a consultation, he came back to the carriage accompanied by Mr. Percy Thornton, M.P. (the historian). Mr. Thornton said to Mrs. Dobell, "Here is the *Times* just come, announcing the death of Gordon. You ought to write an ode upon it." To which she replied, "No, I never could compose when asked to do so." Her husband then went to another consultation close by, and on his coming back to the carriage she said, "Well, I have done it. I hope you will like it." "Like what?" he asked. "My *Ode to Gordon*; here it is. I have scribbled it on the margin of the *Times*, for I had no paper." When they went home she copied it almost without a correction, sent it to Mr. Thornton at once, who posted

it to Mr. Ashmead Bartlett, and it was printed in the next issue of *England*. We quote it to show how little it bears the traces of haste:—

ODE TO GORDON.

Procrastination! So our hero fell!
And England, clothed in sackcloth,
rings his knell!

More fatal harm upon this earth is
wrought

By feeble steps than by men's rasher
deeds,

And, harrowed by the lessons we are
taught,

Each heart for England's noble
soldier bleeds.

Procrastination! So our hero fell!
And England, clothed in sackcloth,
rings his knell!

He, fearless, risked his life, and we—
we waited

For some new meteor to dispel the
gloom!

And he who thought all things were
fated,

Strong in his faith, went onwards to
his doom!

Procrastination! So our hero fell!
And England, clothed in sackcloth,
rings his knell!

What say the bitter cynics of our
days—

Are there no heroes and no martyrs
now!

Will they refuse our sainted Gordon
praise,

Nor crown with monumental wreath
his brow?

Procrastination! So our hero fell!
And England, clothed in sackcloth,
rings his knell!

Go! lay the garland on his tomb with
tears—

Enrol his lofty name with England's
great;

One to be honoured through all future
years,

But one, alas! we honour now—*too
late!*

This rapidity and capacity for work has characterised all she has done from childhood upwards. She was a typical instance of those readers mentioned by Professor Romanes, page 137 of his work on "Mental Evolution." "In a given time," he says, "one individual may be able to read four times as much as another, equally accustomed to extensive reading . . . and I have found that the most rapid reader is *also the best at assimilation*." She seemed to take in the contents of a page at a glance. It was the same with sketching—while others were arranging how to begin, she had finished hers. This enabled her to take advantage of flying opportunities of getting interesting "bits." All her country visits with her children, no matter in what season, brought back full sketch-books; and after her children were grown up and she accompanied her husband on his professional "rounds" in London and its surroundings, she made a large collection of sketches of "Old London," and of interesting buildings, river scenes, etc., in its environs, most of them taken from the carriage window while waiting for him at hospitals, insurance offices, or consulta-

tions. In addition to these, she was able to get a variety of sketches in different parts of England, taken from railway stations, hotels, or carriage windows. For after the girls had married her husband never travelled without her. This determination was come to because one evening, when she was thought to be convalescent, he received an urgent telegram, promising him a large fee, if he would go at once across Europe to see a patient. He had rapidly arranged everything for the journey, and a cab was at the door to go to the station, when, on going to say good-bye to his wife, he was struck by what he feared was the threatenings of a dangerous relapse, which her nurse and companion had failed to recognise.

Reversing all his plans, he at once decided to stop with her; and that night she was seized with an illness so acute and serious that had he not been there she would probably have died before morning. This determined him never again to accept any distant consultation unless it could be arranged for his wife to accompany him. Thus, during the last few years of their London life, when he was in the zenith of his fame, and summonses to distant places were frequently arriving, although the *majority had to be declined*, many flying journeys were made by husband and wife together; and while the physician attended his consultation, his wife, remaining at the hotel or railway station, or in a carriage, amused herself with her sketchbook. THE DIFFICULTIES OF THIS POSITION, AS MAY BE IMAGINED, WERE SO GREAT THAT THEY HAD MUCH TO DO WITH HIS DECISION TO LEAVE LONDON FOR GOOD.

This capacity for rapid work, accompanied by a remarkably good memory, enabled her in girlhood, when in a country village, out of reach of teachers, not only to learn French, German, and a fair amount of Italian, but to read the classical authors in these languages. (See page 6.) But it was accompanied by a strong distaste and, indeed, inability, for puzzling over a subject if it was not at once clear to her quick perception; thus, she would rather tear up a sketch than alter it materially. So, in argument, she was quick in apprehension and incisive in reply, but soon became confused if the subject was involved, or if any complicated difficulty arose—the brain appearing to be too vivid in its action and the *timbre* too delicate to bear prolonged tension. Thus, she wrote:—

LOST IN ICELAND.

Ah, hush! this world has far too much
Of mystery for human touch!
Our narrowed thought, our febrile
brain

Can bear but faint, but guarded
strain;
We see here with imperfect eyes,
We read not from eternal skies
What God deems fittest to bestow
Upon this *unformed* race below.

And, again, she wrote—

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE.

Something unstable in the brain of
man

Still shows that it is powerless to
embrace

The myriad wonders of Creation's
plan—

The mysteries of Time, of Light, of
Space.

This always made her very averse to repeated revisions of her compositions; as she wrote them down, so she liked to put them away, and revision for the press was so distasteful as often to induce her to pass over blemishes and to "let things go," rather than puzzle over a troublesome error. It was much easier for her to compose something new than to re-cast what had once been put upon paper.

It is evident, however, that this inborn difficulty and aversion must have been well contended with, or she could not have got such a large mass of matter through the press with so few errors, even with her husband's help.

Their favourite hours for work were always at night, those usually devoted by her husband to his medical and scientific studies; but, as in the case of the "Ode to Gordon" (see page 57), some poems were composed during the daily carriage drives; and the mornings, while her husband was in his consulting-room, were occupied in copying, arranging, and correcting for the press.

Mrs. Dobell must have composed nearly all of the poems published under the general title of "In the Watches of the Night" before beginning to print, because she classified them into separate volumes, according to the style of subject. This might lead any one taking up a single volume to think there was a monotony of subject, whereas the reviewers constantly refer to their great variety.

"From grave to gay, from lively to severe."

This wide range of subject is to some extent indicated by the titles of the volumes already published, 1886:—

Vol. I. "Too Late, and other Poems: Songs of Love and Sorrow."

Vol. II. "The Cavern by the Sea, and other Sea Songs and Traditions."

Vol. III. "An Incident in His Life, and other Poems."

Vol. IV. "Lost in Iceland, and other Poems."

Vol. V. "Eyes of Darkness, and other Poems."

Vol. VI. "The Voice of Dame Oracle; or, Lays of the Pharisees."

Vol. VII. "The Angel's Visit: Poems of Prayer and Sorrow."

Vol. VIII. "Weird Mists, and other Poems."

Vol. IX. "Under the Stars, and other Poems."

Vol. X. "Lost in the Woods; or, The Cruel Coquette, and other Poems."

Vol. XI. "Wise Hints from an Old Ghost, and other Poems."

Vol. XII. "Darkest Before Dawn, and other Poems."

Vol. XIII. "A Midnight Banquet, and other Poems."

Vol. XIV. "In the Calm, and other Poems."

Vol. XV. "A Scrap-Book." *

Vol. XVI. "Echoes of Stage Thunder."

Vol. XVII. "Weighed in the Balance."

Vol. XVIII. "Songs and Tales for Children."

(Also published separately.)

As the above contain 1,632 separate poems, space will not permit of our giving a sufficient number of extracts to illustrate the authoress's power of dealing with such varied and widely different themes; but some idea of this may be gained from the quotations interspersed through this sketch of her life, and from the following selections from the numerous and divergent opinions which have been expressed by reviewers, according to which volume they happened to have before them. One reviewer says:—

(1.) We are tempted to quote the first verse of some very fine lines in Vol. xv., on "The Departing Sun (an October Sunset)":—

So! "every inch a king," he goes to rest, Throwing his last smile o'er the deep sea waters,	Leaving his mantle on the ocean's breast, Soon to be gathered up by night's pale daughters!
--	--

(2.) What is most striking . . . is their abiding freshness; . . . the more she writes the more the poetic inspiration is apparent.

* Divided into five collections. In this volume is inserted a JUBILEE ODE, composed after the rest of volume was in type (1887).

(3.) Full of feeling, redolent with the love of humanity, and beautiful in religious fervour.

(4.) Her great gift emanates from a heart whose strings are all in unison with that one great chord—sympathy.

(5.) Full of a passionate scorn and detestation of meanness, selfishness, and hypocrisy.

(6.) Verses that depict human feeling, human sorrow, and human hope. . . . It is manifest from many poems in Vol. xi. that the authoress is a woman of strong mind and firm will.

(7.) The words are throughout touchingly beautiful.

(8.) The pensive sadness which characterises many of the poems is lost sight of in "Songs of Heroes."

(9.) He must be a poor creature who does not rise from their perusal with his mind kindled to great achievements.

(10.) One of the most graceful, facile, graphic, and sympathetic poets of the day. . . . There is a good deal of wit exhibited, as well as some pungent satire.

(11.) "Wolfine the Avenger" is a capital poem, full of imaginative thought, and yet in harmony with accounts of the olden times.

(12.) Vol. xv. contains an "Ode on the Jubilee"; it is written in a noble strain, and is infinitely better than many similar compositions that have been published under more pretentious circumstances.

(13.) A tone of real earnestness, combined with true poetic thought and diction, always make the words of this talented lady acceptable. . . . The Queen's character is very tersely summarised in the "Jubilee Ode," in these lines:—

Not even misfortune's saddest, darkest frown
HAS EVER MADE OUR QUEEN, GOD, COUNTRY, HOME FORGET!

A large mass of manuscript remained unpublished at her death, chiefly written before removal from Strete Place, and forming a second and third series of "In the Watches of the Night," consisting of twenty-six volumes corresponding in size to the first series; and also a large mass of prose writings, comprising many notes on scientific, political, religious, and social subjects. These she was often urged to publish.* But after they settled at Parkstone Heights, with its new and delightful interests, and

* The following sad note was found in her bureau after her death:—

"Nov., 1891.
"I contemplated the possibility that in the quiet of our new home, now nearly ready for occupation, I might publish the remaining volumes of my literary work. But a great affliction in connection with our eldest daughter, now in Australia, which has befallen my beloved husband and myself, seems to have *extinguished all ambition and taken all zest out of literary work*. My only desire now is to wait, with my dear one, for the closing scenes of this life, as patiently and peacefully as God will permit, with a heart full of gratitude for the love of my husband and of my youngest daughter, and for the kindly sympathy of her good husband, and of our other son-in-law, the widower of our much-loved daughter, Violet."

its fascinating calm, she did not care to return to the worry, excitement, and distractions of public literary work.

In 1889, in consequence of a breakdown in Dr. Dobell's health, and the opinion of his medical friends that he would not recover while living at the seaside, they most reluctantly sold Strete Place, and took a flat at Carlisle Mansions, Cheyne Walk, London, having fine views over the Thames.* Mrs. Dobell's inability to walk upstairs led them to prefer a flat because of the lift.

During this residence of two and a-half years they visited Mrs. Dobell's old counties of Hertford and Cambridge, staying at the old-fashioned inn, "The Bull at Royston." There was a special interest in that very comfortable old place, not only as the one which her family and herself had been accustomed to use when visiting Royston in her girlhood, but because it was there that the coach stopped when she and her future husband first met (see page 11), and at which the carriages were put up on the day of their marriage (July 5th, 1849). Dr. and Mrs. Dobell made delightful excursions to all the old places so dear to memory as those of their "sweethearting" days, made sketches of many of them, called upon their nephews and nieces, occupying the old family houses at Odsey, etc., etc.

From their flat in London they were able to make frequent visits to their married daughter and her husband (Mr. and Mrs. G. Broke-Freeman), and to their widowed son-in-law (Dr. C. M. Tidy), and to entertain their grandchildren. Dr. Tidy was gradually sinking into the illness of which he died in March, 1892, and these visits, while of great comfort to him, became more and more distressing. After his death the only comfort was that he had left his two orphans, Zoë and Harry, amply provided for. But one great tie to London had gone, and they felt, with regard to Mr. and Mrs. Freeman's family, that it would be of more advantage to them if they had a nice country place to go to when visiting their grandparents than any London residence could offer.

The change to London proved quite unfortunate so far as the restoration of Dr. Dobell's health was concerned. The influenza epidemic set in bitterly soon after they went to Carlisle Mansions, and both were severely hit by it and its sequelæ. The hope that in London the various museums, exhibitions, concerts, etc., etc., could be visited as of yore, was defeated by Mrs. Dobell's inability to go up and down stairs, and this also made visiting impracticable. On the whole, therefore, it became clear that the return to London was a failure all round.

* From their flat they could see Turner's old cottage, from the roof of which he used to paint the river scenes. They could also see all across Battersea Park, the other side of the river, the Albert Bridge, Old Battersea Bridge, and the hills in the distance.

While at Strete Place they had been fortunate enough to secure the freehold of a little estate on Constitution Hill, Parkstone, affording the most lovely and unique building site in the county, perhaps in England; nearly 300 ft. above sea-level, overlooking at different points, Parkstone Village, The Sandbanks, the Purbeck Hills, Old Harry Rocks, the Channel, Brownsea Island, Poole Harbour, and the Backwater—extending to the Tichborne estates—besides inland country at the back, and on to Canford, Kinson, Wimborne, Blandford, Longham Bridge, and the Stour. The plot was a *wild* heath, overgrown with spring and autumn gorse, both kinds of heath, and with heather; quite uncultivated, and partly on a flat plateau and partly running down the hillside towards the sea. But some eighty years ago a rich man from North America had selected this plot for a country house and grounds, and freely planted it with oaks, beech, chestnut, abundance of rhododendrons, and the beautiful creeping shrub, *Gaultheria schallen*, as well as numerous pines, chiefly Scotch. All of them had grown at their will, undisturbed by anybody but gipsies, wild birds, and game—the favourite resort of the nightjar, hedgehog, and squirrel.

They had held this lovely spot for several years, with a vague intention of some day building a house on it and living a completely quiet country life. This happy idea was for the time put out of court by the doctor's orders not to live near the sea. But as the move to London was gradually proving to be a failure, and as this spot was so high above the sea, and nearly three miles from the water, their thoughts turned more and more back to the old idea, and they finally decided to leave London as soon as they had built a suitable residence at what they now named "Parkstone Heights, Dorset."

Dr. Dobell therefore carefully designed a house all on one floor, no steps or stairs, containing just the accommodation they required for themselves and the entertainment of their grandchildren, Zoë and Harry Tidy, and their daughter (Mrs. Freeman) and her husband and family, especially providing a fine library, which should be their "living-room," and a commodious bedroom opening out of it by a door in case of illness. This design he submitted to a good architect, who put the professional details into order, adhering strictly to Dr. Dobell's plans, both outside and in; and a contract was then entered into for its building by an old firm at Royston, well known to the Fordham family, and who, in consequence of a debt of gratitude which they owed Dr. Dobell, took a special interest in doing the work well, making it, in fact, "a labour of love."

To this unique place (see Plate IX.) they finally removed in July, 1892, and at last Mrs. Dobell was placed in every way in surroundings suited to

her condition of health, and congenial to all her natural tastes, her keen love of the beautiful in nature, and her girlish interest in gardening and purely country pursuits. They set to work vigorously to convert the little estate into "a thing of beauty," laying it out in wild heath and rhododendron walks, a spacious lawn in front of the house, surrounded by flower-beds and flowering shrubs, gravel walks beneath the trees on the slopes and declivities, and keeping as much as possible of the original wild beauty, only adapting it to cultivated use.

Mrs Dobell's special* garden was in no sense a "show garden." She selected a part of the grounds as far away from the house as possible, so that she might be out of the way of disturbances, and go on quietly with her favourite work. This was the raising of plants, shrubs, and trees from *seeds* and *cuttings*, and gradually converting a piece of heathland into a grove and shrubbery. It was a never-ending source of quiet pleasure. She had a great aversion to lying in bed, and if not absolutely incapacitated by illness, she was always up to their half-past eight breakfast. She was always a careful but generous housewife, and directly breakfast was over her first business was to go to the kitchen and arrange the affairs of the day. She always told her servants "to be sure and have a jolly good breakfast, so as to begin the day's work cheerfully," and she found that this injunction had the good effect of taking all idea of *stinginess* from her careful and economical management.

This business finished, if weather permitted, she would stroll down to her garden and work away quietly till lunch time. On this spot there are now hundreds of trees and shrubs, some of considerable height, some only a few inches above the ground, having been planted as seedlings within the last two years of her life.

Of course, Dr. Dobell had given up practice when he left Streat Place, and Mrs. Dobell had given up writing; they were both in their 65th year, and fairly tired out when they came to Parkstone Heights.

This place and its absolute calm, fine air and country pursuits, wonderfully restored the health of both; and from this time forth Mrs. Dobell! principally occupied herself with housekeeping, needlework, gardening, reading—much and various—religious, fiction, travel, politics, science, biography, etc., etc.—nothing came amiss to her ever-keen interest in everything. Dr. Dobell read out the more serious books for two or three hours of an evening, while she did her work—personal and household needlework, not *fancy*, this she never cared for. Of course, this place became a great favourite with the grandchildren, and as they were now old enough to be at various schools, it was her pleasure to have them down for holidays, from Marlborough, Bradfield, and other public schools, and for

"leave-outs" from Winchester. There was not much to vary the above routine of life, for it must be remembered that all general visiting of strangers, not old friends, was definitely eschewed, and they asked the Vicar, an old patient of Dr. Dobell's, and the local doctors, to let it be known that they did not wish to be "called upon," as their circle of acquaintances was already as large as they could manage.

A temporary break, which gave Mrs. Dobell great pleasure, was the removal of her favourite sister, the widow of Sydney Dobell, the poet, with her devoted friend, Miss Jolly, from their distant home in Gloucestershire to a house close to Parkstone Heights. Mrs. Sydney Dobell was considerably older than her sister, and in declining health, and, unfortunately, in June, 1900, she died suddenly; but Miss Jolly continued to occupy the house, which was left to her by Mrs. Sydney Dobell. A warm friendship grew up between Miss Jolly and Mrs. Dobell, and she proved a kind and helpful neighbour in all times of trouble and distress.

The greatest change, however, in the general pursuits came about by accident. In 1898, Zoë Tidy left in the care of her grandparents an old violin which they had given her when she was a child. Dr. Dobell found that he could play a few tunes upon it by ear, in fact, his old whistling tunes; he had always a keen musical ear and taste, but had never had time to cultivate any instrument, and did not, in fact, know his notes. Mrs. Dobell, as stated before, was an accomplished musician, with an acute ear for time and tune. It much interested her, therefore, to help her husband to make out the old tunes (*her* old tunes, in fact) on the violin; and thus was gradually revived her love of music. It will be remembered that after her long illness in London, in which she lost her memory and her wonderfully beautiful and facile voice, she never attempted to sing again, and that after the death of Violet she could not bear to *hear music in the house*. Thus she wrote, in 1886:—

I know it seemeth strange to some, and yet, <i>I cannot bear to hear sweet music's strain;</i> It bringeth back the thoughts I would forget— Aye! full of exquisite, if tender, pain. Yes, music maketh sad beyond all speech, It calls up spirits from grass-covered graves—	From spots to which can fancy only reach— From lands that lie beyond our ocean waves. That song! mine eyes were full of bitter tears As on the air its thrilling echoes fell; That song! heard in those far-off, dreamy years— What legends of past griefs it seemed to tell! <i>"In the Watches of the Night."</i>
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Their "Broadwood's grand" was ever after silent, it had been quite untouched during the seven years at Bournemouth, as well as for some time in London previously, and when they left Strete Place, in 1889, it was sold. At Parkstone Heights, therefore, there was *no musical instrument till the appearance of the old violin*. But the desire now rapidly grew in Mrs. Dobell's mind to accompany her husband's violin playing, and on her birthday, in 1899, he made her a present of another Broadwood. From that time forth an hour or two a day was delightfully spent in music. Dr. Dobell having learnt his notes and acquired a certain facility on his instrument, learnt up all the fine airs formerly sung by his wife, and she revived her accompaniments, thus adding this delightful variation to their country pursuits and to the amusement of the grandchildren—and so their world went on.

To the astonishment of every one, notwithstanding her loss of memory, for it never properly returned, and the crippled state of her right hand by rheumatism, she came back to her musical work with no loss of the keen appreciation of time, tune, and harmony, and with an extraordinary facility of fingering, considering the state of her hands. In 1907 they were playing together 160 operatic, sacred, and other pieces by the best composers, old and new—a selected programme being made out for each day.

Although Mrs. Dobell had several severe illnesses at Parkstone Heights, and was always more or less of an invalid, she rallied marvellously well between the attacks. She had a great dislike to "invalidism," and always returned, as quickly as possible, with delight to her garden, her books, and her music, so that on her 80th birthday (March 8th, 1908) her daughter, Horatia Freeman, was able to write to her:—

"To-morrow is a very special birthday, your 80th, and I send you all kinds of loving wishes. It is wonderful how young you keep . . . tend the garden, play the piano, and get up to early breakfast. . . . I do hope your rheumatism is better, and that you will both have a happy birthday."

But her husband knew only too well that—

The light of other days had faded,
And all its glories passed;

For Time, with heavy hand, had shaded
Those hopes too bright to last.

She had slowly declined ever since she underwent a serious operation in November, 1904, after the shock of which, and with a dread lest it might be necessary to repeat it, she became subject to alarming attacks of

* In a letter written after her 80th birthday she wrote, "It is strange I don't feel any older. I thought 80 a tremendous, unreachable age when I was young. I don't think so now. Though I hate all pretence of being young, I really feel altogether more brisk than I remember when younger, enjoying gardening, playing accompaniments to my husband's violin, and so on."

suffocation. They came on quite suddenly, generally in the night, but also occasionally in the day, lasting several hours, in spite of all remedies, so that her husband never dared to be *out of call*. Her power of locomotion had gradually diminished, especially after a severe attack of influenza and broncho-pneumonia in 1907, in which she nearly lost her life. Up to that time she had been able to walk down the grounds to her special garden and back, but after that attack her husband used to take her down to her garden in a wheeled chair and fetch her back. It also became necessary to put up a "storm shed" in her part of the grounds, to which she could retire in case of rain, or when waiting for the chair.

In the end of 1907 and beginning of 1908 she suffered severely from rheumatoid arthritis and cramp in the legs at night, seriously interfering with sleep. In spite of all this her 80th birthday, referred to in her daughter's letter, was particularly calm and happy. But it was almost immediately followed by a violent attack of *Shingles*, from the terribly depressing effects of which she never recovered. As the loss of power of locomotion increased, she became unable to stand alone, and could only be moved about in a "Merlin chair"; the garden chair had to be abandoned. But in all the beautiful weather of the summer of 1908 her husband used to wheel her in her Merlin chair into the most lovely shady spots in the grounds, and there sat and read to her. She had lost all interest in modern fiction, but she never lost her interest in the affairs of *the great world*, religious, political, scientific, or social, and the *Times* was daily looked for to distract her thoughts from her own sorrow. After four months of gradually increasing general *paresis*, she died of heart failure,* August 1st, 1908, at 7.30 a.m., and was buried in Parkstone Cemetery, August 5th, a place by her side being reserved for her husband. (Plate XI.)

* * * * *	
They bore her from each well-loved, homely scene, And from a country home both fair and grey,	From beechwood forest, and from meadow green, They bore her, with slow, winding steps away. * * * * *

* NOTE I.—July 31st was an excessively hot day, and she had not been out; but she was up all day and was wheeled to the open door looking out upon the garden while her husband read to her. She sat up as usual till 11 p.m. Her night was very troublous. But at 5.30 a.m., having at last been placed in a more restful position, she said, "That will do, Love; now come to bed, it is so late"—and in a few minutes she fell asleep. She slept and breathed quite naturally till 7.30, when the heart suddenly stopped while her husband was feeling her pulse, and never beat again.

NOTE II.—Mrs. Dobell's principal illnesses referred to in this sketch, some of which were very long and tedious, were Rheumatoid attacks, 1856-1865; Scarlet Fever, 1865; the long illness with spinal complications referred to in the letter, p. 24, 1871; Sciatica, 1896 and 1897; Illness which culminated in a serious operation, 1904; Influenza and Pulmonary Complications, 1907; Rheumatoid Arthritis and Cramp, end of 1907 and beginning of 1908; Shingles. March and April, 1908, leading to gradually increasing Paresis during May, June, July, and ending during the last three days in Paralysis Agitans, and death by heart failure, August 1st, 1908. In her final illness, to the last conscious moment, there was no aberration of intelligence.

Ah! place the withered roses on her
bier—
O Life! O Love! my last sweet hope
lies here;

I know I call thee back, beloved, in
vain—
Thou can'st not brighten my sad life
again!

"*In the Watches of the Night.*"

Her love of music never faded, and when too weak to play his accompaniments, which had been a source of so much delight to them both, her chief pleasure, up to two days before her death, was to hear him play on the violin some of their favourite tunes.

They had always prayed that she might die before her husband, knowing that no other hand but his could do what he had so long done for her as physician, husband, and nurse. This prayer was granted them.

They were such devoted lovers to the end, that the lines written in 1880 might have been written with equal truth on the last day of her life:—

Yes, *as thou lovest me*, so, dear, do I
Love thee, with all my soul, with all
my heart;

Have I not told thee I should surely
die

If thou and I were on this earth to
part?

* * * * *

No human power our hands' fond clasp
shall sever,

Love! while thou livest I am thine for
ever;

Nay! nor in future realms mine eyes
can see

A life—a state—that is not passed with
thee.

* * * * *

No, love, I fear not death! *yet greatly*
fear

To leave thee lonely, O mine own!
For this

I dread, since I, of all, to thee am
dear;

In kissing me thou givest love's last
kiss

* * * * *

And thou wilt miss me under winter
skies,

When blighting snow is lying on the
lea,

And thou can'st meet no more mine
answering eyes—

Their light is lost upon this earth
to thee.

And thou wilt need me in the summer
days,

Yes! thou wilt ask for me at
eventide;

And looking—nothing, love, will meet
thy gaze,

And feeling—nothing, love, is at
thy side.

Oh, love, not long may'st thou be
desolate;

Thy faithful heart shall in its season
soar

Into the realms where I shall ever
wait

To rest upon thy breast for ever-
more.

We venture to believe that no impartial critic can read Mrs. Dobell's works and this "Life Sketch" without being impressed with the unsullied

loveliness of her mind, and with its remarkable versatility and fertility; with her love of God and fearlessness of man; her deep affection and devotion to her husband, children, and home; her love of Nature; her refined tastes; her artistic talents; her industry; her patience; and her hatred of injustice, hypocrisy, humbug, and superstition, whether lay or clerical. As one of the reviewers of her works said, "They are full of passionate scorn and detestation of meanness, hypocrisy, selfishness, and tyranny."

She seldom allowed her emotions to appear on the surface, and their depth, which was profound, was known to very few. Her friends, as a rule, had no idea of their existence, but they were "strong as death." Yet, withal, there was nothing masculine in her character. She was a true woman; she scorned the idea of women deserting their high functions to assume those of men; and her generous heart* never *coveted* anything except love.

All her life she had been an earnest student of the Bible, upon which alone she based her religious faith, which was simple, pure, and strong from first to last. (See page 6.)

In a volume of "In the Watches of the Night" she wrote:—

Take thou thy footsteps in this life	Not even to save a spirit from
with care;	despair
See that thy lips are true—thy	Can mortal footsteps be retrodden
conscience clear;	here.

And, again:—

* * * * *	I pondered greatly why no more
I thought how silent seemed Thy voice,	evolves
O God!	From earth's long centuries of
These many centuries, as they	human dust,
onward rolled,	<i>Yet felt that still the stronger soul</i>
Until the creatures, sprung from thine	<i>resolves</i>
own sod	<i>To hold his faith and live his life in</i>
Begin to feel their faith and hopes	<i>Trust!</i>
grow cold.	

And, again:—

How long wilt Thou look down on	Our ears hear ever the triumphant
earth—how long	song
O God! shall darkness veil Thy	Of sinners marching swiftly on their
coming day?	way!

* As her rule always was "not to let her left hand know what her right hand did," it would not be fair, even if possible, to disclose her private acts of benevolence.

How long wilt Thou look down on
earth—how long

Let laurel wreaths adorn the brow
of sin,

And see the race for ever to the
strong,

While greed the prizes of this earth
shall win!

How long wilt Thou look down on
earth—how long

Shall all Thy hills the feet of evil
scale,

And glory's shining crown be one of
wrong,

And rapine evermore repeat her
tale!

How long wilt Thou look down on
earth—how long

Ere Thy strong lance of justice shall
be hurled,

And we no more may see the eager
throng

That crowd the darker pathways of
this world!

How long wilt Thou look down on
earth—how long

Shall yet the advent of that cycle be,

When earth shall hear but the
triumphant song

Of peoples marching on the road to
Thee!

As a last act in the drama begun in the country churchyard (see pp. 16, 17), in 1903, Dr. and Mrs. Dobell founded and endowed the "Dr. Horace Dobell Lectureship" at the Royal College of Physicians, for the carrying on, in the light of rapidly advancing science, the objects so dear to their hearts. Under this foundation £50 is to be paid every second year, for about thirty years for a lecture on "The Ultimate Origin, Evolution, and Life History of Bacilli and other Pathogenic Micro-organisms." The first lecture was delivered by Dr. E. E. Klein, in 1904, on "The Life History of Saprophytic and Parasitic Bacteria, and their Mutual Relation." The second lecture was by Dr. F. W. Andrewes, on "The Evolution of the Streptococci," in 1906. The third lecture was by Dr. L. S. Dudgeon, in 1908, on "The Latent Persistence and Re-action of Pathogenic Bacteria in the Body." The fourth lecture will be delivered in 1910.

We will conclude this sketch by quoting from "In the Watches of the Night" the following touching prayer, written in 1885.

Father! Thou hast been merciful
beyond

All expectations of Thy grace—of
mine—

Thou dost forgive me even that I
despond

And, foolishly, *in some dark hours*,
repine.

I know, too well, that I am rarely
meek;

I know, too well, mine is a stubborn
heart;

I know, too well, that I am often weak,
And need Thy help to play a higher
part.

That golden help I ask of Thee, O God! The help that Thou hast ever given to prayer; The thorny pathways that my steps have trod, I now will tread with hope, not with despair. Thy hand to guide me in the gloomy night Thy hand to bind the bitter wounds that bleed;	Thy hand to point out all fair paths of light, I know, O God! is all in life I need. That help is promised unto all who pray With earnest faith and with repentant tears: Oh! guide us ever to Thy higher way, Through the dark pitfalls of our earthly years.
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POSTSCRIPT BY HER HUSBAND.

I thank God! Oh! I thank God, with all my heart and with all my soul that it is *not* my sweet darling love who has to endure the terrible ordeal of being left behind, to finish this earthly life in a desolated home. But I do not forget our sacred promises, made *so* long ago—binding now as then. (See "Absence," 1846, page 12.) Grant, O Lord! that THIS ABSENCE may not be longer than I can bear. "I am weary, I am weary, and I would that I were dead." Nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done!

THE FOLLOWING REMARKABLE DECLARATION OF FAITH was found after the authoress's death, placed by her *at the end of all her manuscripts*, but as the date when those manuscripts will be published is quite uncertain, it has been thought best to print it here. It must have been written about 1892-3, when she was 64 or 65 years old:—

“WITH NO FALTERING HAND.”

(See Note, p. 61.)

I write, yet write it with no faltering hand,
That, even as one awaiting Heaven's command,
I can look upwards to the towers of Fame,
As certain yet mine own in future times to claim.

I know the day—if yet the day is far
Away—will come—*though I shall not be here.*
It may be distant as yon brilliant star,
But that 'twill yet be mine I have no passing fear.

In early youth more ardent thoughts were mine,
The dream of lightly conquering that height
Where Fame's proud temple in man's eyes shall shine
With an enduring, dazzling, e'en immortal light.

MY TASK IS DONE—with patience at its close,
Treasuring its joys, nor angered by its woes,
I look forth to the opening of the Gate
Of life, content with peace and love to wait
Until the hour appointed for this life
To pass, from all its sorrows, sufferings, and strife !

When Kepler finished his famous era-making work he wrote, “I have written my Book. IT WILL BE READ : whether in this age or by posterity matters little. It can wait for its readers.” !

ETHELSTONE, EVELINE,

AND OTHER POEMS:

OR

LEGENDS OF THE CASTLE AND TALES OF THE VILLAGE.



INTRODUCTORY NOTE, 1910.

All the Poems now published had been carefully arranged and revised for "Press" by the Authoress before the year 1893. It has therefore been thought best not to alter this in any way, except in the case of the Remarkable Lines occupying page 72 of this Volume, as there explained in a preliminary note. Whenever the poems are dated, the dates have been preserved. But it will be seen that no Chronological sequence had been attempted by the Authoress, the dates of composition ranging from early childhood to 66 years of age.

THE AUTHORESS'S
PREFACE TO ETHELSTONE, EVELINE,
AND OTHER POEMS, 1880.

THESE Poems were written under many vicissitudes, some only the other day, some in years gone by ; some in a solitary room in an old Manor-house ; some in the green lanes of Hertfordshire and Surrey, some in the wide corn-fields of Cambridge-shire—some by the seashore—and some in the happiest of all places to the authoress—in a London library, by London lamp-light, surrounded by the roar of London life, and with the sweet companionship of a sympathetic fellow-worker.

84, HARLEY STREET.

December, 1880.

ETHELSTONE, EVELINE,

AND OTHER POEMS.

A FAREWELL TO ODSEY.

(Supposed to have been written by one who, passing from the platforms of quiet country life to unknown backwoods in New Zealand, was never heard of again. There was much reason to believe that J. F.* was lost in a remarkably violent tempest, while sailing between New Zealand and Australia.)

FAREWELL—a long farewell!

For me, when evening's tranquil hours
are o'er,
The watch-dog's surly bark, the far sheep-
bell,
Shall wake the echoes of thy woods no
more!
I leave thee, sunny as thou art and fair,
I leave thee to thy calm, unbroken rest,
My step will rouse no more the timid hare,
Or scare the brooding partridge from
its nest.

Farewell—a long farewell!

Ere yet a month hath rolled its course
away,
Ere many setting suns have lit thy dell
With the deep purple of departing day,
I shall be far, far absent, and for me
The curlew's note will henceforth sound
in vain;
The fox may haunt the wood or grassy lea,
But step of mine will scare it not again!

Farewell—a long farewell!

I shall think of thee when the spring
returns,
Recalling oft-times the sweet, tender spell
Of thy rose hedges and thy greenwood
ferns.
I shall think of thee when the swallows
come,
And when thy fairest flowers are in their
prime,
Not *then* shall I forget, forsaken home,
How beautiful thou art in summer time!

Farewell—a long farewell!

Full many a happy hour I owe to
thee,
What time the gentle dews of evening
fell
On lowly flower-bell, or on lofty tree;
And birds were hushed in copsewood and
in dingle,
And voices died upon the summer air,
While the deep shades of evening seemed
to mingle,
And veil the earth for thought, for rest,
for prayer.

Farewell—a long farewell!

I shall remember thee, too, when the
night
Full heavily hath fallen, and the swell
Of worldly feeling dies—as with the
light—
When, poring o'er some wild or thoughtful
book,
Through brightening starlight, when the
flitting bat
Told of the deepening hour with dreamy
look
Beside mine ivied casement I have sat.†

Farewell—a long farewell!

To them and thee, and when again we
meet,
What shall have been no prophet can
foretell,
Nor how the pulses of our hearts may
beat.
It may be when the feeble hand of age
Hath rung o'er Hope's young grave his
dreary knell.
Ah me! that future, weird, mysterious
page
I dare not seek to read—Farewell!
Farewell!

* The Authoress's brother.

† This was a beautiful old window, surrounded by ivy, in the western aspect of Odsey House, where J. F. had lived. See Plate VII.

THE EVENING STAR.

STAR of the evening! from our deep blue
seas

Thou'rt passing, with thy beautiful pale
ray,

From mossy haunts, and noble forest
trees,

And castled crags, and ruins wild and
gray.

Yet linger for one passing moment more
O'er scenes of beauty thou hast loved of
yore.

Though leaves are fallen now and flowers
are dead,

And summer, with its glorious skies,
hath fled,

And summer, with its evening song of
birds—

Oh, linger yet to hear my last sad
words!

For I have loved thee; for thy smile hath
been

Upon me in my hours of thought and
prayer,

When twilight glimmered o'er the wild
wood scene,

And voices died upon the summer air,
And hearts were melted by the softened
sound,

Or by the thrilling hush of all around—
Then have I prayed beneath those silent
skies,

My soul were freed from all its earthly
ties,

That I might follow in thy train, and
see

The glorious Footsteps of Eternity!
Through the long hours of night, when
others sleep,

And I my solitary watch have kept,
When strange, unfathomed thoughts awoke
in me,

And dreams and hopes of things that
might not be,

Wild and mysterious as the stirring strain—
Aye! wilder, and as incomplete and
vain—

A tempest's powerful spirit may awake
From deep and thrilling harp-strings, ere
they break;—

Oh, then, when the brain's passion-dreams
were o'er,

Each vision stern Reality had crushed,

And I could wish that Feeling were no
more,

That the deep voice of Life and
Thought were hushed;—

Then hath thine image met me, so above
All the base conflicts of this mundane
spot,

Breathing of peace, of gentleness, of love,
Of future worlds, of things which perish
not.

Alas! I can but grieve that thy soft light
Must vanish from my yearning, wistful
sight,

Perchance to shine on fairer scenes than
these,

More glorious than *our* dells and plains
and trees!

I owe thee much, fair Star! for thy pale ray
Hath often turned my heart from earth
away;

And through the long twilight, when mists
have hung

Full densely o'er the pinewood and the
hill,

And the weird stillness of the hour hath
flung

A shade of sadness of my spirit,—still
One faithful heart has watched for thy
calm smile

To glimmer through the storm-cloud's
heavy pile!

O light eternal! when my aching head
And weary heart are resting with the
dead,

May my last hour of peace and quiet be
In some lone spot where thou may'st
shine on me,

In some green wilderness, some untrod wild,
Where thou art gleaming, and where
God hath smiled!

THE GOOD PHYSICIAN.

AN aged man sat musing on the past,
Recalling patiently each recollection,
Upon whose pale and furrowed brow was
cast,

The shade of many cares and much
reflection.

Alas! too early had those eyes grown dim,
Too early had that slender form been
bent,

For life had been a busy scene to him—
A task in which his energies were spent

A night was falling round him, like the sleep
 Of Eastern waves when evening is
 declining,
 And Heaven seems o'er the world His
 watch to keep,
 And stars by myriads on the seas are
 shining—
 So calmly on the city's depths it fell!
 Unless the dull wheel of some carriage
 rolled,
 Far distant, drowsily, or some deep bell
 The passing hour from a cathedral
 tolled.

Musing he sat, recalling, as a dream,
 The image of a young, aspiring boy,
 Pacing the streets at morn's most early
 gleam,
 With footsteps light, and bright eyes
 full of joy.
 It might be with that vision in his heart
 Of future years our childhood only
 knows,
 With which too oft in later life we part,
 And think of, as a phantom, at its close!
 More than a dream, in truth, of brilliant
 fame,
 Of high renown, glowed in that ardent
 mind;
 All youth's proud hopes of love, of wealth,
 of name,
 Were his; but even then with these
 combined
 Were nobler aspirations, strong, and yet
 Growing more daily strong, as he began
 To comprehend the task before him set—
 To comfort and to heal his fellow-man!
 That energetic figure bent, at length;
 That boy's rich hair was scattered now
 and grey,
 For since that dawning time of youth and
 strength,
 Near fifty years had rolled their course
 away;
 And with the calm but deep regret that age
 So often brings, he sat reviewing it.
 Perusing once again that mystic page
 On which the stories of our lives are
 writ!
 How had those high aspirings been ful-
 filled?
 How had those lofty dreams been
 realised?

Had that young heart been early checked
 and chilled,
 Its efforts failures, its proud hopes
 despised?
 Did he, too, in thus picturing his past
 life,
 And calling back its hours of joy and
 pain,
 Feel he had waded through a sea of
 strife,
 Like many men, to find his labours
 vain?

Alas! whate'er our efforts may have been,
 There still must have been much in
 which we failed;
 Much guilt and sorrow all who live have
 seen,
 Against which naught of human power
 availed.
 And since that youth hath left his parents'
 hearth,
 He, too, had often grieved above the
 fall
 Of those bright futures, round our earthy
 path
 Built, fondly cherished, and then wept,
 by all!

Ah! marvel not, then, that those fleeting
 years,
 In giving up again each past event,
 Blinded his sad eyes with unwonted tears,
 And deeper shadows to his pale brow
 lent.
 But, conquering soon that tender grief,
 he turned
 From phantasies he long had seen
 depart,
 To other hopes with which his soul had
 burned,
 That came back, even as sunlight, to
 his heart!

He did a lone and narrow room recall—
 A single lamp that half illumined it,
 A table, like that room, confined and
 small,
 Whereby a student oft was wont to
 sit;
 And where, with books and papers round
 him piled,
 He used to study, with a mind untired,
 Until the star of morn upon him smiled,
 Or, in its socket, his dim light expired.

No useless learning that which he
pursued,

No idle lore engaged his leisure then,
No wild ambitious hopes his mind
amused,

Untouched by him the poet's glowing
pen.

Or, if aught visionary could allure
That meditative brow from sober
thought,

No *selfish* dream at least was his—that
cure

For maladies deemed fatal might be
wrought.

Then, as he pondered, there arose again
Remembrance of that student's later life.
He saw him bending o'er the couch of
pain,

He saw him where disease and death
were rife,

Applying all the powers that he possessed
To rescue from a sad or early grave,
His fellow-creatures—o- to give them rest
And passing comfort, if he could not
save.

Oh! he, the just and the upright, who
can

Look back thus on his active life, and
feel

He had dealt rightly by his fellow-man,
And if he failed, yet ever sought to
heal;

How must his heart such recollections
cheer,

Gilding the very pathway to the tomb;
To him the thoughts of death can bring
no fear,

And age, though premature, can bring
no gloom.

So felt that aged man, as he looked back
Upon the path he had from childhood
trod,

And hoped that his had been no useless
track,

But one that was approved of by his
God.

And thus, though tottering on the very
brink

Of man's last home, with a contented
breast

He could wait patiently the hour to sink,
At peace with all men, to his last long
rest.

DIRGE OF THE RED INDIAN WARRIOR.

Go to thy rest!

Not where the tall and calm magnolias
bow,
Slowly and solemnly each snowy crest;
Beneath the violet grass we lay thee
now!

Not where the pine,
With dreary sighing, echoed back thy
tread,
When forest-dwellers made beneath its
shrine
The ancient sleeping-places of their dead.

Not where the stream,
Beneath the arching wild-vine whispers
low,
With spirit voices, when the sun's last
beam
Falls where it bathes thy warriors' dust,
we go!

To thy dark bed
We would not that sad music's wail
should come,
Nor see men bow the plumed and glitter-
ing head
In stately march to the deep-sounding
drum.

They mock us well!
With drooping banners, and the hollow
sound
Long pealing from the battlements, to tell
That thou, our brave, at last has ransom
found!

We do not weep!
Thy brothers have no tears to shed for
thee;
Smiling we gaze upon the dreamless
sleep,
The fetters broken and the captive free!

Hither we bring,
Ere yet the earth on thy cold brow we
lay,
Thy boy! for one wild moment here to
cling,
In love's first sorrow to thy lips of clay.

Bend low and near;
Nor sigh nor moan must break our
chief's repose.
Yet, boy, in thy young heart be written
here
A deep and burning memory of his foe!

ETHELSTONE.

A LEGEND OF THE CASTLE.

O ! tell me a tale of the days of old,
When maidens were lovely and Knights were bold,
And life, with its dull and dreary prose,
Was brightened by praise of the lily and rose.
Ah ! what in these modern days avails
So much of *pretentious* moral tales !
Enough of the Pharisee (not the Saint !),
Enough of the Hypocrite's blighting taint,
In the daily paths of our lives we see—
So a tale of the old Romance for me !

CANTO I.

GREY Hall of Ethelstone ! far out at sea
Benighted vessels steer their course by
thee ;
Tossed on the surges in the fading
light,
When nearer objects only mock the
sight,
Thou, built upon the summit of a hill,
Through unseen danger guid'st the pilot
still.
Fair may thy bowers have been, O
Ethelstone !
Merry with voices silent now and gone—
Bright was thy dwelling on a former
day,
Filled with the forms that since have
passed away,
When, deep in leafy groves, the flowers
sweet
Bent down at the light tread of childish
feet.
Now, when the shades of night enshroud
the earth,
Dim are thy lights, and heard no more
thy mirth ;
Though ever, at the same late, lonely
hour,
Is lit a lamp in Lady Ethel's bower,
Who, scarce emerged from girlhood, and
yet pale
With thought, awaits her absent lover's
sail ;
And thus, through many years, is seen to
keep
Her faithful watch o'er the Atlantic
deep.

Sole heiress of a wealthy sire
She sits unsought and silent there ;
And looks as though the hope and fire
Of youth were quenched in early care.
For Ethel has her mother's eyes,
Her mother's voice, and pensive brow—
That mother, once so worshipped, lies
Forgotten with her kindred now.
And he who worshipped her bears not
The slightest mention of her name ;
Dark and unhappy was her lot—
A broken heart, an injured fame.
But, oh ! in comfort rest thee here,
Below the earth's long-hardened crust,
For slander shall not reach the ear,
Or falsehood wring the heart of dust.
And if, poor wife and mother, Time,
That sometimes even rights the dead,
Hath proved thee innocent of crime,
And planted lilies o'er thy head—
It matters little now to thee,
Sleeping beneath the cypress tree.

There, near the mother, rests the son
One dying of neglect, and one
Was lost 'mid all that most endears
The memory of our youthful years.
The father who so rarely smiled,
Yet brightened, when his favourite child
Drew near, and all that wealth could
give
Was fondly lavished on his path ;
Yet, Heaven ! thy chastened sons must
live !
And by his solitary hearth
The grey-haired parent sits alone,
Though all that cheered his heart is
gone.

Untended is the once gay hall,
The play-ground now is desolate,
And grass and nettles, rank and tall,
Grow up and choke its wicket-gate ;
The moping, discontented hound
Howls in his kennel, night and day—
He misses the accustomed sound
Of voices, calling him to play ;
And sparrows in the chimneys build,
And ivy climbs the walls at will ;
The ancient courts, that once were filled
With childhood's laugh, are cold and still ;
Long spiders'-webs are on the wall
And ceiling of that little room,
Where tiny bed and playthings, all
Are left to dust, and damp, and gloom.

Poor Ethel! all her tender care
 Scothes not her parent's sorrowing mind;
 Made harsher still by his despair,
 He bids her hence, in tones unkind—
 She turns from him her mournful brow,
 But where is she to wander now?
 Not underneath the chestnut shade,
 Where, with the lost one, oft she played.

Two weary years have passed away
 Since that most sad, unhappy day;
 And down beside the bubbling spring
 Where first the primrose glads the sight,
 And where the fairies form their ring
 And revel in the moon's full light,
 Beneath the twisted, scented thorn
 Sits Ethel, in the light of morn.
 And one, whose bright and rapturous
 gaze

The glorious Hope of youth betrays,
 Whose eyes so often search for hers,
 Too eloquent interpreters!
 Is near her, sketching her sweet face,
 Her form of elegance and grace.
 It matters little whence he came,
 Nor yet what titles graced his name;
 Whatever was his heritage,
 His brow was like an open page,
 Whose characters, distinct and bold,
 Spoke there the spirit, warm and true—
 Why care, then, Reader, to be told,
 How ranked he in the world's cold view?

Fairest of all the fairy spots
 That here th' admiring gazer seeks,
 Where hawthorns grow in rugged knots,
 And shed their blossoms in the breeze;
 And where, beside the mossy creek,
 The water-wagtail builds her nest,
 Or wild bee, humming, comes to seek
 The flow'rets that she loves the best,
 How suited to a scene like this!
 To those whose voices love and bliss
 So soften, that the timid hare
 Wakes not among the Meadow-sweet,
 But slumbers even at Ethel's feet.

Fondly and long the lover lingers
 O'er each fair line his pencils trace;
 There must be magic in those fingers,
 So like, so truthful is that face.
 First Love! sweet Love! ere yet the world
 Hath chilled us with its prudent creed,
 While yet the living page is furled
 We afterwards so sadly read,

Beneath the stars there cannot be
 An earthly joy compared to thee.
 O happy youth; with hope elate,
 Thy heaven appearing near to view,
 Thy soul aspiring to be great,
 Thy heart resolving to be true,
 How is thy breast with rapture moved,
 As, veiled by twilight's friendly hours,
 The graceful form of thy beloved
 Meets thee among the greenwood bowers!
 And wandering homeward through the
 vale,

While sheep-bells tinkle from afar,
 Thy lips still breathe the same fond tale,
 Beneath thy favourite evening star;
 Still promising that life shall be
 As tranquil as that tranquil night,
 When even the Night-jar seemed to thee
 A Nightingale in thy delight.
 Yes—hope that *thou* may'st realise
 This glorious promise of thy heart;
 But, ah! thy brother's mournful eyes
 Have long since seen *his* dream depart.
 He sits beside his lonely hearth—
 Cold—cheerless—loveless—desolate—
 Returning on his homeward path,
 None fly to meet him at the gate;
 She, once the idol of his youth,
 Even she hath left him there alone,
 His model once of Love and Truth
 To cheer a stranger's home is gone!

Awhile with hearts that warmly beat,
 Untroubled by an evil doubt,
 By changing lights the lovers meet,
 Forgetful of the world without.
 A little time that dream dispels,
 As Ethel's faltering footsteps tell,
 Her tears, and scarce coherent speech,
 One night, upon the sandy beach;
 While looking dim and on the wane,
 The moon sets slowly on the main.
 This hour they part; ere breaks the day
 Her lover will be far away—
 "And yet I kneel not at thy feet
 To take the oaths that others swear,
 To vow, that never voice was sweet,
 That never form but thine was fair"—
 Said Ernest, in a tender tone,
 Pressing her hand within his own.

"No; Heaven has given to thee the
 charms,
 Beside which face and form are vain,
 That make the clasp of these frail arms
 More binding than the strongest chain.

The soul that lights thy gentle eyes,
 The tender kindness of thy speech,
 Have taught me more of Paradise
 Than all that priest or pastor teach.
 If I am poor and lowly born,
 I think thou lov'st me more, not less;
 When others speak of me with scorn,
 Thy dark eyes swim with tenderness.
 Once loved, once deeply loved by thee,
 I know I cannot be forgot;
 Whate'er my future lot may be,
 This worst of fears will haunt me not.
 Such perfect faith thy love hath taught,
 That I have sometimes fondly thought,
 None who inspired so firm a trust,
 Could have been formed in kindred dust!
 And now I leave thee, love, for Rome;
 Alas! I shall be long from home—
 Though only till my labours earn
 For thee so bright and wide a fame,
 That, when in triumph I return,
 Thy father shall not scorn my claim.
 O Heaven! this hour instructs too well
 The heart that knew not grief before;
 Too dear for words or looks to tell,
 One last embrace, one more—one more!"

"Farewell!" That last embrace is
 o'er—

But motionless upon the shore
 Still Ethel, cold and pale, remained,
 Each nerve of hearing wildly strained
 To follow still her lover's track
 By each faint footfall echoing back.
 Yes! he may trust her, if we may
 Trust any on our earthly way:
 Though, through her eyes there often
 smiled

The meekness of a very child,
 The strong attachments veiled below
 A universe could scarce o'erthrow.
 While tranquilly there dwelt within
 The heart that worshipped without sin,
 Such faithful, truthful, pure belief—
 Such trust in him she loved—her tears
 Were only those of simple grief
 In parting from him, though for years.
 Not what the world would call a saint,
 But grief had taught her self-restraint.
 The fluttering breath, the timid sigh,
 Heard when her lover's step was nigh,
 The voice, so tremulously sweet,
 Betrayed how that warm heart could beat.
 But passion was subservient still
 To higher powers—to nobler will.

It could not slave so pure a soul,
 Whose high affections sought a goal,
 A Paradise wherein to live,
 That passion has no power to give.
 They who would think to lightly sound
 A mind so temperate—truthful—wise—
 A love that had no human bound,
 Yet learned not thoughtlessly to prize—
 These careless triflers little think
 How silently, link after link
 Was joined, to form that loving chain,
 That life shall never break again;
 For rather, with a gentle pride,
 A mind so modest seeks to hide,
 From those that gaze with mocking eyes,
 The joys for which it lives and dies.

CANTO II.

"FAR, in the calmest hour
 Of night, the clear, shrill piping of a bird,
 Resounding from some wreck of Roman
 power,
 Oft on the high surrounding hills is heard.
 For o'er the fallen warrior's buried crest
 It builds its lonely, unmolested nest.

"The statue from its niche
 Hath been dragged down and trampled in
 the dust;
 The brazen image, and the palace rich
 With carving, left to rapine and to rust.
 These, and the rifled tomb and grass-
 grown fane,
 Are all that now of Roman pomp remain.

"Rome, when her blood-stained
 hand
 The flag of Death and Victory unfurled
 Above the fair homes of some ravished
 land,
 Looked, spoke, and felt, the conqueress
 of the world!
 The wreath of laurel binds no more her
 brow;
 Proud empress, say, where are thy
 triumphs now!

"Tread reverently—thy tread,
 O wanderer! is on her mighty dead.
 Yon wild flowers, with their bells of
 beauty, hide
 The monument defaced—the column's
 pride.
 Men raised them there to tell a tale to us,
 Nor dreamed posterity would read it thus.

"O mortal! if a boast
Of human greatness e'er thy lips defiles,
Remember Rome! her nation's conquered
host,
Her noble cities, heaped in ruined piles.
So learn humility; for here below
No wiser lesson human hearts may know."

Thus mused an artist as the day
Closed o'er him on the Roman plains,
And sadly cast upon his way
The shadows of their vast remains.
For who, with thoughtful step has pressed
The ground where heroes take their rest—
Where, cumbering the unconscious soil
Of radiant spring, lies heaped the spoil
Of temples, human hands prepared
As dwellings fitted for a god—
Oh! who, in human shape, has dared
To tread the ground that Cæsar trod,
Nor thus reflected, as the light,
By brilliant stars and planets cast,
Gave greater magnitude by night
To these grand records of the past!
There—at that hour—the very wind
Sighs forth, from tombs and emptied urns,
Those solemn lessons that the mind
So tardily and sadly learns.

Near the rapt gazer, where the mound
Is raised above the bones of those
Who rest, however once renowned,
In indiscriminate repose
Reclined a Roman girl, whose face
Recalled, by its fixed, earnest gaze,
Those characters of Roman race
So rarely seen in modern days.
Her haughty brow, her lofty mien,
Might well have graced a Roman queen!
And yet she wore no brodered vest,
Her robe was neither rich nor wide,
But simply as a peasant dressed
She wandered forth at eventide,
To gather, with her brother's aid,
The sleepy herds, that idly strayed
And cropped the pasture as it grew
O'er tombs whose history none can
trace!
Or slept among the flowers, nor knew
How memory sanctified the place.

Descendant of a noble line,
Her fortunes with the past were gone;
Her task was now to tend the kine—
This daughter of an ancient throne!

Forgetting never, as her slow
And stately steps, at break of day,
Or at the sunset's parting glow,
Pursued her lone, inglorious way,
That through her young and restless veins
Flowed blood of those who scorned the
chains—

The mean and ignominious crimes,
That mark the race in later times.
So, living only in the past,
The shadowy sadness of her eye
Confessed her spirit overcast,
By mourning for a time gone by,
Embittered by the sense of shame
Now clinging to her country's name.

Formed in a different mould from hers,
Her brother was a bright, young boy,
Who had the warm, free pulse that
stirs

With every passing grief or joy.
That evening, resting at her feet,
His own within his sister's hand,
He mused on dreams, as pure and
sweet

As those we steal from fairy-land:
Or raised his large and lustrous eyes
To count each star that lit the skies,
And seemed a careful watch to keep
Above this kindred world, that lay
Enraptured on the breast of Sleep,
Forgetful of the parted day.
So peaceful was the air, that she,
Who seemed so often sad of soul,
Sat rapt in some sweet reverie;
And yielding to that hour's control,
She, who so often sang with fire
The heroes of her native land,
To-night awoke her silvery lyre
Ere long, with hesitating hand;
While passionate, and with a swell
Of tenderness, in her most rare,
Her flute-like voice arose and fell
To some Aeolian dream-like air;
Though something might the ear have
caught
Of bitter, self-reproachful thought,
That mingled sadly with the sigh
Of her voluptuous Italy.

"I hear thee, O my heart!
Thou hast aroused me with a sudden start;
And, turning from the tombstones, damp
and grey,
I look up, dazzled by a new-born day.

"Trembling with unknown fear,
Bewildered by a new and sweet delight,
Strange melodies are wafted to mine ear,
Strange worlds are dawning on my
troubled sight.

"Rome! beautiful in chains,
Most god-like phantom of thy former
state,
I thought my heart was buried in thy
plains,
Or marble, as the statues of thy Great.

"I wake thee not again,
Thou mournful lyre, with Rome's
imperial lays;
I must attune thee to a softer strain,
And crown thee now with roses, not with
bays.

"Thy reign of pride is o'er—
O Roman daughter! boast thyself no
more;
Descendant of the noble and the brave,
Alas! thou, too, art suppliant and a
slave.

"Bend lowly, then, thy knee;
There is a goddess greater than thy Rome,
Whose slightest sigh shall have more
power o'er thee
Than all the pæans of thine ancient
home!"

Lifting her glowing face to heaven,
Such queen-like sadness o'er it spread,
Even Ethel almost had forgiven
The eyes that there seemed riveted.
Then, with a trembling hand, once more
Marcella struck her lyre, but now
Her song was fainter than before,
And sung with an averted brow.

"Tell me if thou hast loved,
O Saxon! Something in thy kindling
cheek,
Thy flashing eye, thy frame so strongly
moved,
Confesses what the lips are last to speak.

"Know'st thou what 'tis to feel
Such sweet enslavement of the heart and
brain,
That thou, transported, wouldst not shame
to kneel,
And kiss the fingers riveting thy chain?

"See if thy firmer hand
Can tune my disobedient lyre aright.
My touch is faltering, and can scarce
command
The melody of its full tones to-night."

ERNEST'S REPLY.

"Fairest of Roman daughters!
Far across the sea,
Where England breasts the blue Atlantic
waters,
One faithful heart is watching now for
me.

"Not her's the southern eye,
So languishing and bright—
'Tis rather like the mildness of a sky
Touched by the morning's first celestial
light.

"Full many a weary year
Her heart hath kept its plight,
While summer bloomed and autumn
leaves grew sere,
Or angry tempests woke the winter's
night.

"But, idol of my heart—
Most precious life! no more
Vain, worldly obstacles our fates shall
part;
The weariness of thy long watch is o'er!

"For soon I see again
My native, sunny isle,
Its cottage homes, its sheepfolds on the
plain,
Its rivers gleaming in the sun's calm smile.

"O fair Marcella, thou
And I no more may meet;
Yet oft shall I recall thy noble brow,
Thy brilliant eye, thy voice so rich and
sweet."

He fancied that he heard the sound
Of weeping, but he was alone;
He paused, and looked in vain around—
Marcella—Flavius—both were gone.
Far o'er the distant hills arose
The moon, but looking sick and pale,
And shining through her misty veil,
Like one subdued by secret woes.
And Ernest watched her with a sigh—
His mood was changed—he knew not
why;

But suddenly there seemed a weight
 To press upon his heart and brain;
 He felt as though some ghostly Fate
 Moved sullenly across the plain.
 Fortune had favoured his career—
 His path to glory had been clear—
 He stood a victor where, of yore,
 A conqueror had stood before.
 Yet sorrowing voices seemed to fill
 The future with a dull despair—
 A face, whereon was seen the chill
 Of Death, seemed gazing through the air;
 Recalling, to his fevered mind,
 The voice and face of one he loved.
 They were but fancies, scarce defined,
 And yet his very soul was moved.
 Oh! oft, in after troubled years,
 Returned that night of spectral fears,
 When, musing on his distant home,
 He stood upon the plains of Rome!

O'er the bent flowers and dewy grass
 A voice of warning seemed to pass;
 Faint as the sound of some far bell
 That catches yet eludes the ear—
 Sad as the tolling of a knell,
 It mocked yet filled his heart with fear.
 "O thou!" it murmured, "whose light
 tread

Profanes the precincts of the dead—
 Who grasp'st at all within thy reach,
 Forgetful what the past might teach—
 Fond, foolish youth, shall grief and
 change

For ever to thy heart be strange?
 Shall joy and pleasure be the words
 That wake alone thy heart's deep chords?
 Must all the past portentous signs,
 All wisdom elder minds impart,
 Be lost within the light that shines
 Round some fond idol of thy heart?
 Alas! how little can thy gaze
 Have read of what the wise are shown,
 How little learned of human ways,
 To call one single heart thine own!
 Far wiser thou, to stop and pray
 Beside some tombstone on thy way."

CANTO III.

His steps are on his native shore,
 'Tis England welcomes him once more.
 There is the grey old dwelling yet—
 Yon lurid sun, so soon to set,

Shines redly on the ivy leaves
 Now clustering o'er its very eaves;
 And there the casement, so well known,
 Where Ethel used to sit alone.
 Full many weary years have passed
 Away, since Ernest saw her last;
 And yet he pictures her as bright
 As in that hour of hope and bliss,
 When first the trembling, loving light
 Of her pure eyes encountered his;
 More timid than the first pale ray
 Of starlight kissing now the bay,
 Ere yet the sunset's gorgeous smile
 Hath faded quite from rock and isle.
 And pausing where lay heavily
 Deep shadows, both of rock and tree,
 Fond, dreamy memories, that thrilled
 Not less than hopes of future years—
 The eyes of Ernest slowly filled
 With tender and delicious tears.
 There, where the shore is smooth and low,
 'Twas there they parted years ago,
 With heavy hearts, oppressed with
 sorrow—

'Twill be their trysting place to-morrow!
 But, ah! he stood not there alone—
 Upon a broken, mossy stone
 Sat one whose gaze seemed calmly fixed
 Upon that distant point of sight,
 Where sky and sea seem intermixed,
 And melt and mingle in the light.
 The moisture of the ocean air
 Unbound her long, luxuriant hair,
 The winds played gently with each tress,
 As she sat mute and motionless.
 But, when she heard his footsteps bound,
 She sprang up with a frantic cry,
 That wrung his heart, as though the sound
 Were not of joy, but agony;
 Then, shrinking from his touch, she
 bowed
 Her pale, wild face, and wept aloud.

One moment's glance had shown that face
 So strangely marked by sorrow's trace
 He scarcely knew it for her own—
 Hope, joy, youth, beauty—all were gone.
 "How changed thou art! I did not dream
 So great a grief awaited me;
 When dark my future hopes might seem
 I never thought of change in thee."
 Said Ernest, in the weary tone—
 The dull, unbroken voice of one
 Too stunned by sudden grief to show
 That grief in outward signs of woe.

"Thou wert to me as some fixed star,
That still shone brightly, though afar;
A steady beacon in the dark,
That gleamed when other light had
died,

By which I steered my trembling bark
O'er the fierce breakers of life's tide.
How changed thou art to meet me
thus!

It had not been in earlier days;
Yon blue sky bending over us,
Had then less softness than thy gaze.
I do not mourn thy faded cheek—

'Tis not of change like that I speak;
It was not for thy girlish brow
I loved thee, or could love thee now.
Oh! if one smile, one tender smile
Could light thy altered face awhile,
It were more beautiful to me
Than sunbeam to the pilot, tossed
Upon some strange, tempestuous sea,
His anchor gone, his rudder lost.

Alas! thou art so sadly changed
That even thy heart has grown estranged.
Speak to me! if thou hast forgot
Our parting on this very spot,"

He added, in a tone more wild;
"If I have only been beguiled
By falsehood—if thou would'st deny
The vows exchanged in fonder hours—
Forswear them! I will not ask why—
Forswear them! even in sight of bowers
Beneath whose listening trees I heard
Those mute lips breathe the first, fond
word.

I could not prize a love so light
That storms could change or seasons
blight;

And if thy heart be lost to me,
However great the pang may be,
False love, I only wait to sever
The ties that bound us, and for ever."

"It might be better for *thy* sake,
Even rudely thus those ties to break";
Said Ethel, in a tone so low,
It scarcely reached her lover's ear—
So full of that fixed, hopeless woe,
It chills the very heart to hear;
"It might be better thus; but, oh!
In anger we can never part;
I cannot leave thee, love, and know
I have no portion in thy heart.
Hear me; it is the only boon
That I have now the right to crave;

We part before the yellow moon
Shall rise upon the ocean wave;
But I have first a tale to tell—
Yes, then, but not till then—*Farewell!*

"It will be kinder to be brief,
For oft suspense is worse than grief;
I will but lightly touch on years
When, in my sad and loveless home,
I prayed, but not with bitter tears,
For this, our meeting hour, to come.
Beloved! I knew that I possessed
All that thy gifted soul could give,
And deemed that none were half so
blessed,

Who shared the common life we live.
I only watched, with gentle sigh,
The flowers of summer droop and die.
I only hoped, as winter passed,
Each long, dark vigil were the last.
And there was one sweet hope that still
Gilded each hour's sad loneliness,
Like some bright watch-fire on a hill,
That shines into each dark recess
Of gloomy cave and shadowy steep,
When darkness broods upon the deep.
For, as I dwelt upon some trait
Of kindness in an earlier day,
I hoped there yet would come an hour
When, softened by my love and care,
My father's dream of rank and power
Would melt away before my prayer.
I feel, too well, that I might seem
To other minds a very child;
But, ah! it was a blissful dream—
'Twas happy to be so beguiled.
And when, at last, the phantom light
That seemed so tranquilly to burn,
And cheer the darkness of my night,
Departed, never to return,
I only wished still thus to rest
Deluded, not aroused to weep;
Or wrapt within that dreamless sleep
That none could ever more molest.

"It was a still and lovely eve,
And I was wandering on the beach
To watch the waters fall and heave,
As though they strove in vain to reach
The sky, that met them from above
With such a smile of golden love!
How brightly that bright hour is fixed
Upon my mind! I scarcely know
Why this should be—its close was mixed
With so much agonising woe.

But I remember now so well
 How, with the soft and gradual swell
 Of song across the listening waters,
 The voices of our peasant daughters,
 Blent with the fishermen's rude notes,
 Would reach me from some wandering
 boats.

While thy dear image o'er me stole,
 So free from bitterness like this,
 There could not, in a human soul,
 Dwell more of gratitude and bliss.

"So smooth, so level was the sand,
 I had not heard a step draw near;
 And, when I felt a grasping hand,
 I started up with sudden fear.
 It was my father's glance I met—
 Ah! heaven, why can I not forget!
 I should have told thee, ere this day
 I had refused the proffered love
 Of him whose castle, tall and grey,
 Thou may'st distinguish far above,
 And looking, like a monarch, down
 Upon the homes of yon fair town.
 I knew it grieved my father—still
 I little thought that it could fill
 His heart with so much bitterness.
 I saw his pallid lips compress
 With scorn that shook his very frame,
 Each time he breathed thy hated name.
 I need not tell thee what he said—
 'Tis better buried with the dead—
 Save only, that unless I swore
 That I would never see thee more,
 That father's heaviest curse should be
 The only dower I brought to thee.

"I tried to speak, but I forgot
 All common forms of speech or prayer;
 I tried to think, but I could not—
 I only pictured thy despair.
 The dim ideas that floated by
 Seemed notes that caught yet mocked my
 eye.

For at that fearful time, I felt
 More strange bewilderment than pain—
 Confused and stupefied, I knelt—
 Speechless—imploring—but in vain!

"Thou knowest well—alas! too well—
 How changed I am since last we met;
 There is no need of words to tell
 I might forswear thee—not forget.
 Long, weary years await us now;
 So weary, that I need not cast
 A deeper shadow on thy brow
 By telling thee of what is past.

"The autumn leaves were dry and sere,
 The winds were howling o'er the mere,
 When, in a vault's despairing gloom,
 I stood beside my father's tomb;
 And felt, within its walls had perished
 The last fond hope my heart had
 cherished.

Those lips could never now revoke
 The curse that they so sternly spoke.
 I thought of all those proud domains
 They then called mine—the fertile plains,
 The meadow lands beside the sea—
 What were they now to him or me?
 Ah! rather, all that once was glad,
 The fragrant heath, the wooded height,
 To me became each day more sad,
 More filled with sorrow in my sight.
 I only knew my bosom burned
 With shame, to think that love like thine,
 A gift so noble had been spurned
 For such possessions as were mine.
 But yet I cannot be thy bride;
 For both of us is now despair
 And anguish even, side by side;
 A father's curse awaits us there.
 Then urge me not; but if thy heart
 Still loves me as I would be loved,
 Hear not my bitter prayer unmoved—
 Pity—forgive me, and depart."

He calmed, with one angelic look,
 The fearful tumult of her breast;
 He soothed the shattered frame that shook
 With grief so hard to be repressed—
 Then gently raised her drooping head,
 And pressed her trembling hand and said,
 "Unmoved! O never could I hear
 Unmoved, a prayer from one so dear;
 Whatever after-suffering
 The granting of that prayer might bring.
 I go, then; never more to seek
 To see thy face, to hear thee speak;
 But I will still return to thee
 In dreams, and wander on this beach,
 To picture joy beyond our reach,
 A joy that now may never be.
 Look up, and let me gaze once more
 Into thine eyes, love, as of yore.
 Hast thou no parting look to give—
 No fond embrace—that I may live
 In after darkened years, and dwell
 Upon the love of this farewell?"

The weary watch of many years was o'er;
 The light within the chamber shone no
 more.

CANTO IV.

FAIR hour of eve! by angels given
 To soothe the careworn sons of earth,
 When sunset leaves its glowing heaven
 To orbs of an inferior birth,
 And Labour, looking to the west,
 Sees that the wished-for hour has come,
 And, faint and weary, seeks the rest
 Found sweetest in a peasant's home;
 Thou purest balm to those that grieve
 O'er human weaknesses and crimes,
 Whose beauty woos the world to leave
 Its busy thoughts for fitter times,
 How often, at thy tranquil hour,
 We feel the past arise again,
 So vividly as to o'erpower
 Each colder purpose of the brain,
 And seem to live once more in days
 The brightest that we may have known,
 Made brighter by the magic rays
 That Memory throws around her own!

And yet not always can'st thou bring—
 O hour of holiness and rest!—
 The thoughts that have no secret sting,
 The memories that are only blessed.
 To him, who to thy peaceful sky
 Uplifts so sad and worn a face,
 Thou hast but brought the bitter sigh,
 Thy joys have found no resting-place.
 It is a young, yet grey-haired man—
 That face and form are finely set,
 And yet, alas! what eye can scan
 Their noble lines without regret?
 Although we see the mien of one
 Not strange to free and noble thought,
 Both energy and strength are gone—
 Or seem but fitful and o'erwrought.
 The leaden cheek, the fevered brow,
 Of dissipation speak too well,
 And languidly is beating now
 The heart that once could warmly swell!
 He seeks no more the glorious aims
 Whose hopes had made his youth so
 bright,
 And Friendship finds no nearer claims,
 And Love has lost its purer light.
 And yet, without an envious smart,
 He sees, in happier homes than his,
 The blessing of a trusting heart,
 The sweetness of domestic bliss.
 For never hath he worn the sneer
 We see the disappointed wear,

Nor less hath flowed the ready tear
 To soothe another's woe and care.
 There have been times when brighter
 years

In all their former hues returned—
 When Sorrow dried her bitter tears
 In fires that on her altars burned;
 But, ah! the Genii brooding there
 No earthly hope could long allure,
 His was the acme of despair,
 The grief that scarcely sighed for cure!

Most beautiful and young the form
 Reclining now at Ernest's feet;
 But, if that brow be strong and warm,
 'Tis scarcely womanly or sweet.
 Alas! its anxious lines express
 A fate but thinly veiled by pride,
 Too dearly won was that caress—
 Poor maiden! she is not his bride.
 We miss the timid, modest glance,
 The charm of woman's countenance,
 The downcast eyelids that express,
 Yet half conceal, their tenderness;
 But nothing of the helpless air
 That marks her lover's mien is there—
 Whatever pangs that breast have torn
 They have been met with equal scorn.
 To her the retrospect that brings
 The placid brow—the soothing sigh—
 Can calm no pent-up sufferings,
 Nor bring the tear-drop to her eye.
 Unbent—untouched—she thinks to meet
 The fate that holds her sternly down;
 The world that scorns her she can greet
 With not less proud, disdainful frown.
 For such an earthly Paradise
 As that she forms around her now,
 Who would not leave the purer skies
 That light the moralist's cold brow?
 Thou wildest dreamer! it is vain,
 Thou canst not hush the voice within;
 Thou canst not break the gnawing
 chain
 That links together grief and sin;
 Think not this vaunted outward show
 Is like the peace that thou hast lost—
 How little that warm heart could know
 Of all its love and sin would cost!
 Forsaken by thine own esteem,
 Thy Paradise is but a dream;
 It fades ere yet the frailest flowers
 Have vanished from their summer bowers,
 And, once departed from the earth,
 Alas! it knows no second birth.

Music and laughter float around,
 Fair forms and sunny brows are there,
 The hall re-echoes to the sound
 Of many a soft, seductive air :
 Young voices that are rich and sweet,
 And hearts that warmly, wildly feel,
 Bright eyes that flash whenever they
 meet,
 With joy they care not to conceal,
 These are with Ernest—but they wake
 No chord responsive in his breast;
 Whatever form their mirth may take
 He cares not, so they let him rest!
 Although the master of that hall,
 He seems a strange and silent host,
 His thoughts are far—his spirit lost,
 Beyond their, or his own, recall.
 They give the lyre into his hand,
 They bid him sing a song of joy—
 Some legend of a fairy-land,
 Where love exists without alloy.
 He takes it with a brow unchanged,
 And, as he lifts his dreamy eye,
 They mark his mind is still estranged,
 His gaze intent on vacancy.
 He sees no more the present scene,
 Nor yet Marcella's changing mien,
 Forgetful of the startled throng,
 He wakes this sad and solemn song.

DREAMS.*

"Dreams! how they haunt the brain
 With fantasies as beautiful as vain;
 The long-lost dead arise
 And bend on us their unforgotten eyes,
 Until we start from sleep
 To find them fading into air—and weep!

"Forms that so long have lain
 In marble rest—in undisturbed repose,
 Return to us again
 With recollections of departed woes,
 And bring the bitter tears
 That wept the sorrows of our buried
 years.

"Eyes that the icy hand
 Of DEATH hath long since set, uncloze
 again—

And from a far-off land
 The absent come, a pale and silent train,
 Whose mild yet tender gaze
 Recalls the fervid love of youth's fond
 days—

"Lips that his cruel seal
 Hath sternly fixed, again look warm and
 bright,

Hearts that no more can feel,
 Seem wrung with grief or trembling with
 delight.

Aye! all that we can learn
 Of human life may thus in dreams
 return!

"Yet sad it were, if all
 We loved should pass for evermore away,
 Shrouded beneath the pall
 Whose sombre folds conceal their dread
 decay—

'Twere better that once more
 They thus should visit those they loved
 before.

"Yea! bitter though it is,
 When in these mystic dreams some gentle
 tone

Recalls a faded bliss,
 To waken from our joy and find it gone—
 Far greater were the pain
 To know that love and memory were in
 vain!

"So come, ye shadows pale,
 From the dim regions where may be thy
 rest!

Not with despairing wail,
 Or sad hands clasped upon each shadowy
 breast,

Rather with memories of a happier time,
 When youth was bright and sorrow
 seemed a crime."

Hush! ere the echoes of that lay
 Die in the spacious halls away,
 Another voice, of richer sound,
 Pours its full, glorious notes around.
 None present those clear accents heard
 But felt the singer's soul was stirred;
 Though haughty and disdainful still,
 No tremor in her tones was caught,
 But yet there was a mournful thrill,
 And oft a vein of bitter thought:
 Alas! too plainly they expressed
 The tortured passions of her breast.

"Day closed upon the plains of ancient
 Rome.

And they who wandered in the flitting
 light,
 Communing with the Genii of the past,

* These lines differ slightly from those quoted on p. 20 from an earlier copy.

Paused silently beneath the wakened stars.

And both were young; and one a youth, whose brow

Was glorified by Hope—yet undeceived!

The other was a maiden, pale and grave,

Long used to Sorrow, and not strange to

Thought.

"And timidly she touched, with faltering hand,

A lyre that she had loved from early youth,

Nor ever, till that hour, had tuned to lays

More soft than pæans to eternal Rome;

But now her heart was changed, and knew no more

The wan enthusiast of forgotten tombs;

Like one bewildered by a waking dream,

Her song was faint and tremulous with love.

"He listened, but his heart was far away

In some fair region of the distant West;

Where, by the borders of the sounding sea,

Dwelt one as beautiful as morning light,

Who loved him with the pure, unshaken love

So rare among the daughters of the earth,

And he was hastening homeward, o'er the wave,

To find a home upon her faithful breast.

"Alas! the Roman maiden had a heart

Warm as the hearts of old romance—too true

For peace or rest. She followed him across

The deep Atlantic, and forgot her home!

They met again: the youth was then a changed

And sadder man; like others, he had learned

The fatal lesson of this human life—

For Hope had been deceived and Love was false.

"Thou weakest of mankind! who still recalls

And mourns o'er visions that have long proved false,

Who stills permits a love forsworn to reign

The empress of the strongholds of thy heart—

How long shall all the glory of thy youth
Be dimmed by sickly fancies from the past?

How long shall summer bloom for thee in vain,

And music wake no echo in thy breast?

"Far in the loveliness of a fair land

I buried the free soul, that once was stirred

By feelings that can find no utterance here—

So let it rest, forgotten 'mid the flowers!

But thou! who art a man, yet shaming not

To weep the tears a woman can despise—

Degenerate son of earth, why slumber thus,

Forgetful of the mission of thy youth!"

Marcella! never more shalt thou

Forget the low, the smothered sigh,

That cools the fever of thy brow,

And shames the mockery of thine eye!

But now the lights—the guests—are gone—

The weary hostess sits alone.

Quenched is that bosom's angry fire,

Her head droops sadly o'er her lyre.

And, musing thus, a gentle kind

Of tremor seemed to thrill her frame,

As though, upon her darkened mind,

The dawn of better feelings came.

With timid steps she seeks the room

Where Ernest oft retires to rest;

That chamber now is left in gloom,

The lamp is out, the couch unpressed.

For in his once-loved studio, where

But rarely prying steps intrude,

He sits in drooping attitude,

Nor knows what watchful eyes are there.

And she is softly drawing near,

Her look is pensive now and sweet;

She thinks to drop that glistening tear,

And seek forgiveness—at his feet.

Ah! heaven, what portrait meets her gaze,

What young and lovely face is this?

What tells it of those fatal days

His memory cannot yet dismiss?

How nobly—calmly—sits that air

Of wisdom on the brow of youth!

How tender the expression there!

How full of purity and truth!

And if too much of passion lies

For perfect rest in those deep eyes,

So much of earnest faith and trust

To regulate its depths is given,

That, if that fragile form be dust,
The spirit is inspired of Heaven.

Alas! alas! whate'er thy sin,
Poor maiden, none, without a sigh
Of sympathy could look within,
And read thy heart's fierce agony,
As wildly thy scarce conscious hands
Tear thy long tresses from their bands!
Thou feelest that thy reign is o'er,
That thou hast drained thy cup of bliss—
The cup that shall be thine no more;
But, oh! 'tis bitterer than this
To know thine own no unjust fate;
Thine own mad fingers wove thy chain,
Thine own mad act hath closed the gate
That ne'er will ope to thee again.
The world despised—that world will now
Receive no more thy branded brow!

He speaks to her with soothing tone—
This man whom she hath loved so much—
He lays his hand upon her own,
She only shudders at the touch;
His words fall coldly on her ear,
They bring her neither sigh nor tear;
She listens motionless, but seems
Like one who only hears in dreams.
"Thy heart was happier once; yes, thou
Wert happier on the mountain's brow,
While listening to the shepherd's notes,
Or tending to thy flocks of goats,
Than 'mid the hot and fevered din,
The glitter of our halls of sin.
Thou hast a mother there—return!
At least thy mother will not spurn
Her penitent and sinning child—
At least thy mother, who hath smiled
Upon thy babyhood, whose tears
And prayers have watched thy early years,
In fond remembrance of those days
Will never turn from thee her gaze!
Go then, poor maiden, go and rest
Once more on her forgiving breast—
Return——"

"Return; oh! yes, return!

To some it is a joyful word,
But in mine ear it seems to burn
As though a demon's voice I heard."
And, starting from her seeming trance,
She turned to him th' imploring glance
That might to tears of pity move,
But could not win a look of love.
"Nor home, nor country can I claim;
Alas! they would disown my name.

But thou, cold heart, what dost *thou* care?
What, unto thee, is my despair?
I would thou wert no longer dear!
I would I had the strength to tear
Thine image from my mind, and fling
Away that soul-less, faithless thing!
But, oh! I own myself so weak,
I cannot even hear thee speak
Of aught that parts us—let me be
Thy servant, or whate'er thou wilt;
But little choice is left for me,
The slave of love, and worse—of guilt."

"Marcella! no; 'tis best we part.
But not in anger, be it said;
For thou hast loved me, and thy heart
Hath pillowed oft my sleeping head.
I hoped that I might there forget
The sorrows of my early troth;
But would that we had never met,
It had been better for us both!
It is but mockery thus to live—
Thou seest I have no heart to give.
Farewell for ever."

"Then farewell!
That word for thee, shall ring the knell
Of all that life might yet bestow
Of happiness and peace below!
I loved thee well, unfeeling man,
Yet I have knelt to thee in vain;
Thou dost despise me; but I can
Turn, like the trodden worm, again!
I go; but even as I go,
The love of woman leaves thy hearth;
It shall but bring thee tears and woe—
Not cheer again thy earthly path.
Farewell!"

She waits not his reply,
But turns to him her dull, fixed eye—
Her brow from which all light is gone—
Her lips now set like lips of stone—
Then draws her mantle round her face,
And leaves him with a measured pace.
He sits alone; his brow is damp,
His hand is trembling, and the lamp,
That long a sickly light had cast,
Sank, dying, as Marcella passed.
It is not for the curious eye
To read that soul's dark mystery—
So leave him there: the hour is late,
The timid stars, that only wait
The breaking of another day,
Fade slowly in the dawn away.

CANTO V.

SWEET Ethel! surely Time hath cast
Few shadows o'er thee as he passed.
Thy form hath still its simple grace,
The bloom is yet upon thy cheeks,
And still the same soft, pensive face
Thy gentle, tender soul bespeaks!
Alas! the light within thine eye
Is like a watch-fire lit by Death—
The leaf that wears the richest dye
Falls soonest at the Winter's breath.
In vain that brightness would deceive,
In vain that young and girlish air;
But, oh! in reverence let us grieve,
For more of heaven than earth is there.

Down in the village, as the low
Of cattle fills the morning air,
She wanders, with a footstep slow,
As though she loves to loiter there.
Whatever tempests have beset
The simple pathway she hath trod,
They have been meekly, humbly met,
Her grief was only shown to God.

And her's is now th' untroubled mind
That suffering, nobly borne, will bring,
When earthly love becomes refined,
And memory scarcely knows a sting.
I once was shown some simple lines—
They say she wrote them at this time—
I give them here, but not as signs
Of either gift or power sublime,
But simply to denote the calm
That oft so pure a mind attains,
When Thought and Fancy bring but balm,
And only speak in peaceful strains.

THE VILLAGE CHURCH.

"THE village church, no proud, assuming
tower,
No lofty spire it raises to the sky;
It hath no outward show of pomp and
power,
Attracting haughtily the stranger's eye;
But, often hidden in some shady nook,
Its lowly outline, as declining day
Gives to the earth the twilight's dreamy
look,
Mingles with other shapes and fades
away.

"The village church! it boasts no
arching aisle
That echoed once the lordly abbot's tread;
The sun that glimmers in with tranquil
smile
Shines on no monument of noble dead;
Nor bears it trace of Puritanic crimes
Or virtues, to reward the curious search;
The rude, defacing hand of early times
Molested not the humble village church.

"The village church! its quiet shade it
throws
Not on the tombstones of the rich and
brave,
But rather on the scarcely marked repose
Of him who slumbers in a peasant's grave.
And in its lonely churchyard may arise
The earnest accents of a mourner's prayer,
Uninterrupted, to the clear, grey skies—
The only murmur on the summer air.

"The village church! its bells are loud
and clear,
Not silvery, as within a city's wall;
But, mellowed by the distance, on the ear,
Like fairy melodies their changes fall.
The shepherd hears, far off, each swelling
note,
The woodman listens in his wooded fells,
And pauses from his work; for merry
float
O'er head the echoes of his native bells.

"The village church! the owl by day-
light sits
Amid the ivy, as it richly trails
O'er the grey walls, and wakes and dreams
by fits;
Nor stirs abroad until the daylight fails;
For only few and straggling steps pass by
To scare it from its green and pleasant
perch;
The spot is sacred, and the very sky
Salutes with loving smile the Village
Church."

We are forgetting for a while,
How Ethel wanders in the morn,
Now leaning on some rustic stile,
Now wandering through the fields of corn.
And now she rests beneath a tree
Bent with the burden of the sweet
Ripe mulberries; but who is he
Who kneels so wildly at her feet?

They meet who have not met for years!
 And Ethel, whose enraptured glance
 Breaks often through her gushing tears,
 Locks down on Ernest's countenance.
 Ah! feebly, faintly, words express
 The joy of meeting such as this;
 The rapture of the first caress,
 The clasping hands, the clinging kiss.
 And even if that joy be brief,
 Like stars that vanish as they shine,
 'Tis worth an age of tears and grief
 To live in moments so divine!
 Alas! too soon that rapture fled,
 And faintly, sadly, Ethel said,
 "Mine own dear Ernest, can it be
 Thy heart is still so true to me?
 It may be sweet to know it thus—
 To read as clearly on thy face
 As thou on mine, nor time, nor space
 Nor circumstance had power o'er us.
 I can but feel this joy, and yet,
 Could I now speak in tones of blame,
 'Twere wiser that we had not met,
 To learn each other's hearts the same.
 I fear, beloved, it will but add
 Another sorrow to thy heart,
 The life that is already sad
 Will be but sadder when we part."

"Speak not of parting! nay, I can
 Be calm no longer—let me speak!
 Why thus assume me more than man?
 I am but human—erring—weak.
 I cannot longer lead this life,
 This strange, divided life of ours,
 I live but on the sea of strife,
 I am the slave of unseen powers.
 We have been parted long, and yet
 How lovely is thy brow—more fair
 Than when we parted, for regret
 Alone, and not remorse, is there.
 How ruby are thy lips! how bright
 The glow upon thy cheek! that eye
 Emits such brilliant, fervid light,
 It might have shamed an Indian sky.
 Oh! my beloved, when I read
 The life that in thy gaze is clear,
 Well may my heart be wrung, and bleed
 To think upon mine own career—
 So reckless, and so stained with sin,
 The bye-ways that my steps have known;
 If e'er a holier life I win,
 I shall not win that life alone!
 Ah! they who dare to separate,
 And leave the loving to despair,

And load the buoyant with a weight
 Beyond his youthful strength to bear,
 Must have a dark account to pay
 When human periods pass away.
 Dear love, it was not right or wise
 In thee to aid in such a wrong,
 It ne'er is right to sacrifice
 The loving to the proud and strong.
 I dare to call thee much to blame
 To take that cruel—unjust vow,
 Forgetting I, too, had a claim—
 But yet more wrong to keep it now.
 Thou wert the anchor of my soul,
 And, oh! when fiercely torn away,
 Where'er the restless waves might roll,
 They bore me, a resistless prey.
 Be thou that anchor once again—
 Restore, reclaim me! I will be
 What I have sought to be in vain,
 When separate from love and thee.
 Is there no fond, persuasive voice
 For me within thy heart to pray?
 Ah! Ethel, can it be thy choice
 To cast thy lover's soul away?"

"Beloved, I feel that thou art right
 In part—that I did wrong to swear
 A vow that had the power to blight
 Thy youth, and leave thee to despair.
 I often feared it might be so";
 Said Ethel, tenderly and low.
 "Yet, not the less I deem it wrong
 To break that vow, thus held so long,
 So solemnly—so sadly given—
 And kept with so much faith to Heaven.
 But, oh! I cannot keep this creed
 And hear thy voice so wildly plead.
 I cannot leave thy soul to sink
 In darkness, or thy heart to break;
 Even if it be the sin I think,
 I will commit it for thy sake.
 I will be thine; whate'er betide,
 My place is henceforth at thy side.
 And if there yet be time to win
 Such glory back as once was thine,
 Such peace as once reposed within,
 Dear Ernest, let that task be mine."

"O if there yet be time!" this phrase,
 So touching in its meaning—words
 So rarely heard in youthful days,
 How must they wring his heart's deep
 chords!
 No; nothing hath he heard, or hears,
 Save this, "I will be thine." O Grief!

Stern ruler o'er so many years,
Yield him this respite; it is brief.
And slowly, with a joy too deep
For utterance, up the grassy steep,
And through the scented meadow land,
Homeward they wander, hand in hand.

Fair broke the moon, the very flowers
Seemed smiling in their mossy dells;
And joyfully, through woodland bowers,
Rang out the merry marriage bells.
Lady of Ethelstone! that day
How many gay young girls were dressed
In white rosettes and white array,
To look their loveliest and best!
Thou wert so much beloved, that they,
Who scattered roses on thy path,
Turned oft aside to weep and pray
That Heaven might bless thy home and
hearth.

One only, muffled in her hood,
And scarcely noticed by the rest,
Despairingly, in silence, stood,
And clenched her hands upon her breast.
It was Marcella! but whate'er
The fell design that brought her there,
The awful grief that closed that day,
Turned her revengeful thoughts away.
The power that seemed to stand before
Her mad and desperate hand and crime,
It may be, at that moment, wore
A form so threatening and sublime,
It calmed and humbled her; she went
Back on her joyless way once more;
It might be henceforth to repent,
It might be otherwise; but o'er
Her fate for ever hangs a veil—
We guess, but do not know her tale.
None, who had known her in the flower
Of youth, beheld her from that hour.
But, ah! so many live and die,
Who take the path that she hath done,
We yield them but a passing sigh,
Remembrance rests with Heaven alone.
Man, busy with the little stir
Of his own greatness, lacks the time
To track the trembling steps that err,
On, down the dread abyss of crime.

The hour grew late, and soft and slow
Closed in the evening; one by one
The clouds, that caught its parting glow,
Went down the pathway of the sun.
Ah! never shall that sun arise
On earth, to glad again the eyes

That watch, with such an anxious gaze,
The gradual fading of its rays.
And is she—can she—be resigned?
No; but the sorrows of that mind
Heaven will forgive; yea, even forgive
Her momentary prayer to live.
The cold, damp shadow of the grave
Is closing round her even here;
But, oh! not for herself that brave
Strong heart shrinks back with sudden
fear!

For there beside her lowly bends
A figure shaken by despair;
Ah! how that sob her bosom rends—
It is her husband weeping there!
And, torn by this strong agony,
She turns her pale, despairing face,
To meet that husband's grateful eye—
To take—to give—the last embrace.
He knew not then—he could not guess—
The world of grief and love expressed
In the convulsive tenderness
With which she held him to her breast.
And knew that on his rapturous heart
Her own, ere long, would cease to beat;
That thus, scarce wedded, they must part,
To meet—ah! where and when to meet?

Through twilight's soft and silvery haze
Looks down the well-loved star of eve,
For ever, with the same meek rays,
Alike for those that joy or grieve!
The owl is hooting from the tree,
And Ethel's pale lips move in prayer;
And, sinking at her husband's knee,
She rests awhile in silence there.
But something like a sigh—a sound,
Faint, feeble, fluttering, meets his ear;
And Ernest lifts her from the ground,
Like one appalled with sudden fear,
And sees, O heaven! what sees he there?
His Ethel's beautiful warm eye
Now fixing in the dull, cold stare
Of nothingness and vacancy.

And all is over now, the hurrying tread,
The busy hands that fain would wake the
dead;
The sound of grief—the glare of lights—
all gone—
They leave him, by his own command,
alone.
Ah! why is it so much of sorrow clings
Round the fond idols that on earth we
form;

Exalted, prized, above all human things,
 Fair in the sunshine, nor yet changed in storm,
 Yet torn, in one wild moment, from our side,
 When Love seems victor—Circumstance defied?
 Is it that we dare raise them even above
 The holier smile of an Eternal Love?
 Thou heart-bereaved! when in the grave they lay
 The form so madly loved as more than clay,
 They bury there thy hopes, thy joys, but oh!
 Curse not the fate that leaves thee still below;
 Plant thou the cypress o'er that grave—and wait:
 God hears the Meek, and cheers the Desolate.

END OF ETHELSTONE.

THE LOST STAR.

FAREWELL! farewell! my dream of thee is o'er,
 And I may watch and weep for thee, but never
 Look on thy pale, unearthly beauty more;
 Thou'rt gone from this sad world of mine for ever.
 Within our shadowed sky thy place is dark,
 And there are few that vacant place to mark—
 Few in whose mind thy light will dwell, as when
 Thou wert beloved, admired, and sought by men.
 The world revereth not departed things,
 But, turning from the thoughts their memory brings,
 Lost in some future vision, dares to tread
 O'er the green mound, remembering not the dead!
 True; but it may be folly thus to yearn
 O'er dreams that may not to the heart return,
 To touch the notes of song that thrill no more
 With that deep sweetness they possessed of yore.
 Oh! now that I no more can strike the lyre
 With prophet's daring hand or poet's fire,

Now that my soul is faint, my hand unstrung,
 And o'er the heart its own wild hopes have wrung,
 There pass no images of love and light,
 To gild the darkness of its heavy night,
 'Twere better that its music were forgot
 Than waken thus to quiver and to die,
 All harsh and unmelodious; but I
 Have prayed I might forget, and—I could not!

Why, in thy lofty beauty, hast thou passed
 Without one lingering look, one pitying ray,
 To be remembered, treasured as thy last,
 When thy bright dwelling-place is far away?
 Have I, then, watched thy gentle light so long,
 And loved thee with a love too true and strong?
 Not as with passion of an earthly stamp,
 That, like the blue flame of a quivering lamp,
 Through the deep stillness of the summer air,
 While midnight skies are clear, burns bright and fair,
 Then, when the change and the wild storms come on,
 One last expiring flash, and it is gone!
 No—I have loved thee with a love unshaken,
 Through storm and sunshine—yet am thus forsaken!
 Oh! I, who though a dweller on this earth,
 Have turned from the light words of hollow mirth,
 And marked the thoughtless brow—the wanton eye—
 To feel they had but little sympathy
 To touch my heart; must I, then, never know
 The speaking gaze, the soft and thrilling tone
 Whose secret spell binds heart to heart below?
 Are these things shut from me—and me alone?
 Ah! must I never see the dark eye melt
 With that fond feeling kindred hearts have felt,

Though loving still, with that deep, burn-
ing swell
Of thought and feeling words can never
tell?

I would have died—have suffered all—for
thee

Had there been but one echo in thy
heart;

Had there been but one kindly thought
for me,

I could have borne to see thee e'en
depart!

But there was none—thou wert so far
removed

From the low, humble sphere wherein
I dwell;

And I did wrong to love as I have loved,
My heavy grief I have deserved too well.

Alas! the Hand that hath created thee
Hath made thee beautiful, but far from
me!

It was not wise to love so bright a ray—
To seek from mine own trodden path to
stray.

My recompense is now in bitter tears—
All that is left, a grief of many years—
The cruel knowledge that I did but rave
To think that pale and peaceful light of
thine

For ever on mine earthly path would
shine;

It will not even gleam upon my grave!

Once more, Farewell! My dream of thee
is o'er,

And I may watch and weep for thee,
but never

Look on thy pale, unearthly beauty more;
Thou'rt gone from this sad world of
mine for ever!

AN APPEAL TO FRANCE.

I WOULD not seek to argue with thee,
France!

The sophist's triumph never lit my
brow;

And if it had, but small would be the
chance

Against one famed for subtilty as
thou;

But to thy feelings, to thy heart, I would
Appeal, even in thy present angry
mood;

For thou hast much within thee true
and good,
Mixed with the recklessness of thy half-
southern blood.

I would not argue of decree or law,
But to thy past experience appeal;
Thy right to right thyself dispute not,
nor

Bid thee for monarchs more respect to
feel;

For there may be oppression we know
not.

I would not wish thee tamely to
submit;

Thou may'st *mean* well, but hast thou,
then, forgot

Thou can'st not quench, at will, a flame so
madly lit?

Hast thou no other method of redress
Than that fierce weapon now up-
raised by thee?

Must, then, the cry of terror and distress
Follow the steps that seek for liberty?

Alas! in these "enlightened" times,
must still

The trumpet's peal sound o'er the
startled earth,

Thy daughters' eyes with tears of
anguish fill,

From fear to what dark woes its echoes
may give birth?

Yes! "Mourir pour la patrie!" be thy
cry,

Yes! battle—but against a foreign foe.
Lift not thy warlike arm so madly high,

Against *thyself* must now rebound
that blow!

Go forth into the battle if thou wilt;
Thou hast brought out thy sword—gird
on that sword—

But not by thee a brother's blood be
spilt,

Or dare not let *thy country* be the rousing
word!

I would remind thee of a time gone by,
When a dark curse had fallen on thy
land,

And nations looked upon thee with a
sigh.

Or pointed at thee with deriding
hand.

I would recall to thee a fatal tale
 By gory fingers on thy annals traced—
 I would recall to thee a long, sad
 wail,
 That rang then, shuddering, o'er thy
 country's ghastly waste!

Forget it not! that cry so madly wild
 Against thee, unto God in judgment
 rose;
 Forget it not! thy hearth was then
 defiled
 By all the crimes that man's dark
 bosom knows.
 Remember if—as in that hellish time—
 Thou dost pretend oppression's bonds
 to free,
 Yet loosen but the chains of rage and
 crime,
 Great was the punishment, and great
 again shall be!

[NOTE.—These lines were written one evening,
 on hearing the rumour of a fresh Revolution in France
 —happily a false one.]

A LETTER.

THEY who have o'er thee watched, year
 after year,
 They who have prophesied Life had in
 store
 For thee a brilliant and a high career,
 Now turn aside and silently deplore!
 They who once loved to watch thy lofty
 brow,
 Now shame to see the change that guilt
 hath wrought.
 Why was thy faith so lightly shaken—
 thou
 Forgetting all thy lips were early taught?
 I knew thee once as one of nobler
 mind—
 Thou wert not, once, ungentle or unkind,
 Thou loved'st me then—dost thou remem-
 ber how?
 Those days were happy—art thou happier
 now?
 Those summer evenings—do they haunt
 thee not?
 Those pure amusements—are they quite
 forgot?
 Thy youth's bright visions—have they all
 passed by,
 Demanding no remembering hours? And
 I—

Have I, too, loved thee with a love un-
 shaken,
 So long, so fondly, to be thus forsaken?
 Could I have lifted once, the heavy
 veil
 That hides the future, and have learned
 thy fate,
 Could I have read the dark and bitter
 tale,
 Whose later knowledge leaves me
 desolate,
 Have known that thou would'st tarnish thus
 thy youth,
 Forgetting all thy lips had learned of
 truth,
 To be a scoffer, with unholy men—
 I had not loved thee as I loved thee
 then!

But go! I have forgiven thee — my
 heart
 Pities but hates not, even the thing thou
 art.
 I loved with too much truth to wish thee
 ill,
 Too fondly not to sorrow for thee still.
 Go! but remember that though now thy
 name
 I hear not uttered but with tears of
 shame,
 And from mine heart thine image seek to
 wring,
 Day after day, as but a worthless thing,
 Remember still, if in some distant days,
 The world should go distasteful to thy
 gaze,
 Turn from its tinselled scenery once more,
 To all that thou so fondly loved before—
 A lesson bitter, but yet wise to learn—
 Oh, fear thou not reproach from me—
 Return!
 I will not welcome thee as many would,
 Not with cold counsels of the sternly
 good
 Will I receive thee, nor with saddest
 tears
 Watch o'er the close of thy embittered
 years;
 But from the world to which thy chains
 were fast
 Lift up thy heart to hope—to heaven—at
 last!
 Soothing thy restless spirit to repose,
 Till o'er us both the grave in peace shall
 close!

IMPROMPTU LINES ON HEARING
OF THE HOPELESS ILLNESS
OF MRS. HERBERT FORDHAM.

THEY tell me thou art dying, while the
sound is on the breeze
Of the hum of many beetles, of the wild
birds in the trees;
While those that watch beside thee with
heartbroken murmurs pray
That the hand of the Destroyer yet a
greater Hand shall stay.

O! thou friend of many seasons, oh! thou
faithful friend of years,
I cannot hear thy fate without the rush of
bitter tears!

The calm walks of our girlhood are return-
ing to my mind,
When spring's bright gladness faded, or
the summer's sun declined,
When we strolled beneath "our fir-trees,"
with soft moss beneath our feet,
And the smell of early roses and of new-
made hay was sweet;
And when you went wandering onwards
with a closer friend than I;
Ah! those days of early friendship whose
dear memories cannot die!

Companion, wife, and mother, all in one
brave heart combined,
Few had thy powers of soothing, or thy
gentleness of mind;
No words of careless mockery *our* friend-
ship ever marred,
Thy sympathy was certain—e'en reproof
was never hard.
In illness you remembered me with all a
sister's kindness,
And my faults you treated leniently, with
more than sister's blindness.
We, who may follow, well may wish so
pure a close as thine
To Life's long weary pilgrimage—'tis *we*
who must repine;
While we tread the arduous path that thou
so patiently hast trod,
And remain below to mourn thee, thou
wilt be at peace with God!

[NOTE.—Mrs. H. F. and I had always been
devoted and unwavering friends, through circum-
stances of great family difficulty. — See page 26.

THOUGHTS IN THE CHAMBER
OF DEATH.

MEN pass it by—that solitary light
That shines from Death's sad chamber
through the night,
Nor ask they why it glimmers there
so late;
The grief within is hopeless, desolate!
In loneliness our vigil must we keep,
The stars look on, but marvel why we
weep.

There is no sympathy in outward things
With the deep woe that oft the human
bosom wrings.

So, as with sinking heart and heavy
eye,
We sit and watch beside the untrimmed
lamp,
And listen to the sufferer's deep-drawn
sigh,
Or wipe from his cold brow Death's fear-
ful damp—
There cometh in a bright and sudden
ray
Through the half-opened shutter as of
day,
Lighting the chamber with a vivid
smile—
Draw softly back that curtain—morning
breaks, the while!

It is a moonbeam; sullenly and
slow
The heavy clouds from night's fair planet
roll,
And night is glorious, yet we feel as
though
That glory were a weight upon the soul.
The stars shine out as brilliantly as
when
In summer-time the clouds are all forgot,
Yet shrink we from their beauty, as from
men
Who pass us by in joy and know our
sorrow not!

There is a weary sadness in this life,
That all must feel, yet none with us can
share;
The heart that wars most boldly with its
strife,

Trampling most proudly on its stern
 despair,
 Yet sinks beneath that seeming lesser
 ill,
 That cometh as a twilight o'er the
 heart;
 For something beautiful and holy, still
 With its deep melancholy claims a kindred
 part.

Alas! the consciousness of life's decay,
 E'en when by beauty's side, fills us with
 awe,
 And we would fain that knowledge fling
 away—
 In some loved form forget its fatal law.
 Reluctant—nay, refusing oft—to learn,
 From the dull fading eyes of Death we
 turn,
 For something unto which the heart may
 cling
 In fearlessness to love, as an immortal
 thing!

Yea! we unto ourselves a world would
 make,
 Unlike the one we live in! peopling it
 With forms decay knows not, for whose
 sweet sake
 To live, with whose fond feelings ours to
 knit;
 Fearing no more that, when we love them
 most,
 Beneath their fair young feet may yawn
 the tomb,
 That when we call them ours, with love's
 sweet boast,
 E'en then they may depart and leave the
 world in gloom!

Vain fancy! near the spot where Death is
 shrouded,
 The wild flowers bloom and deck the
 mossy stone;
 Their blue-bells, like a summer sky,
 unclouded—

"Within, but not without, Death! is thine
 own."

So sing we, while the summer days are
 ours—

Alas! those days depart, and we awake,
 And find we did but dream; the fair
 young flowers
 Depart, and all but Death that silent
 mound forsake.

EVELINE.

A TALE OF THE VILLAGE.

DATE 1852.

"Turn Thee unto me, and have mercy upon me;
 for I am desolate and afflicted."—PSALM xxv.

"I looked for some to take pity, but there was
 none; and for comforters, but I found none."—PSALM
 lxix.

CANTO I.

It was the closing of a day in spring,
 The herdsman led his cattle to the stream,
 The swallow caught upon its glancing
 wing

The tranquil glory of the last sunbeam.
 Meanwhile, the wind that o'er an English
 vale

Wafted the breath of the departing hours,
 Told all it passed the same delicious tale
 Of hidden violets and acacia flowers.

That vale was little known, and meet for
 him

Who loves to dwell beneath a placid sky;
 Its simple rustic dwellings—calm and
 trim—

Had even made Ambition heave a sigh.
 The lofty hills, that shut it from the world,
 Were clothed with giant trees, of age un-
 known;

The quiet smoke that through their
 branches curled,

Arose from village cottages alone.

No haughty noble built his mansion there,
 Nor pride, nor fashion marred its
 sanctitude;

'Twas too remote from City heat and glare,
 For wealth's delusive pleasures to intrude.
 The villager went forth upon his way,
 As morning starlight faded on his path,
 Returning, at the closing of the day,
 To seek contentedly his humble hearth.
 No dazzling dreams his peace of mind
 destroyed,

For him the present day sufficed alone,
 Its unbought pleasures calmly he enjoyed,
 Nor prayed for life less toilsome than his
 own.

One spot within this beautiful retreat
 Was yet more fair, more peaceful than the
 rest,

The flowery turf felt softer to the feet,
 The ring-dove cooed securely from her
 nest.

And there—beneath the branches of a
 wood,

That formed a graceful background to the
glade—
The low-thatched cottage of a peasant
stood,
Embowered, like some fond secret, in the
shade.

That evening, listening to the sighing
leaves,
A maiden sat beneath its lowly eaves;
And with her earnest eyes intently raised,
Through long green avenues of beech trees
gazed,
To mark how far the mountain shades
were thrown
Across the village that she called her own.
In truth she was a village child, though
thought
Shone through her gaze no rustic life had
taught.
'Tis rarely that we meet with eyes like
those—
They spoke not of unrest or of repose—
Not wild and yet not quiet—but their
glance
Inspired a feeling even of awe—as though
Through the soft bloom of that young
countenance,
Spoke the stern prophecy of future woe.
Yet ever, as the rolling year passed by,
Had Eveline, with careless hand and light,
Gathered the flowers beneath a smiling sky,
Or watched for glow-worms through the
summer night.
The sun that rose behind the eastern hill,
Each morn awoke her with its early rays,
To seek some solitary spot, and fill
Its listening depths with her clear hymn of
praise.
The same bright sun had shone upon her
path,
As, hastening homeward in the evening
hours,
She crossed the greenwood to her humble
hearth,
Her fragile basket filled with fruits or
flowers.
And yet at times a gentle sadness played
Around her beautiful and childlike
mouth—
A something that no English birth
betrayed,
A look of the soft languor of the South,
A pensiveness that scarce was grief, and
yet

Too often showed itself in sighs and tears :
Those eyelids, too, with their long fringe
of jet,
Drooped somewhat painfully for her young
years.

'Tis said there was a gossip-loving dame,
Who, o'er her tea, used often to relate
How Eveline from foreign climates came;
And how her parents met some fearful
fate,
And left a little orphan girl below,
To weep o'er an inheritance of woe.
So she was sent across the sea, to find
A sweet, though simple, home — and
friendly smile,
From one to whom her parents had been
kind,
When once they visited the English isle.
Alas! this good old friend the livelong day
Would spend in chatting with some neigh-
bouring crone,
So left her tender charge to steal away
Far—far into the woods, and muse alone.
Full oft in their warm shadows she
beguiled
The weary hours by some too glowing
thought,
Then once again resumed the playful child,
And garlands for her lambs, of woodbine
wrought.
The very bird, that in the deep hedge-row
Built its neat nest with carefulness and
pains,
So that no eye except its own might know;
The goat that browsed along the grassy
lanes—
She called her friends; and oft she could
rejoice
In such companions, when no human
voice
Found echo in the young and thoughtful
mind
That secretly for love more kindred pined.
For though she loved the summer-time—
the sweet
Green earth, and the blue sky that bent
above—
The warm, fond heart that in her bosom
beat,
Still whispered her there was a deeper
love
Than that which filled her dark eye with
the tear
Of pity, for the dying flower or bird;

And passions strong as death, which have
their sphere
Where the great voice of human life is
heard.

As summer skies grew warmer, she for-
sook

All old and well-worn tracks—and wiled
away

The long, soft evenings by some lonely
brook,

Where she could watch the water-birds at
play;

And throw them crumbs betimes—then
start to feel

That tears were slowly gathering in her
eyes,

And wonder grief upon her heart should
steal,

In such fair scenes, and under such fair
skies!

Then, when the sorrow of the desolate
O'erpowered her with its weariness and
weight,

The maiden, with a timid step, would
seek

For comfort in the village homes around.
Alas! that delicate and lily cheek,

That voice so low and tender in its sound,
Found not its likeness or its echo there.

Though, with most sympathising ear, she
sat

And listened to the metron's tale of care,
Or joined the rustic maidens in their chat,

There was not one to hear *her* tale—the
breast

On which her young and artless head
might rest,

However gentle, was too unrefined
To feel or soothe the troubles of her mind.

So passed her life away, till o'er her
head

Her seventeenth uneventful year had sped.
For winter came and went, and spring-

time flung
Her spells again upon the earth, and
hung

Festoons of blossoms on each verdant
bough;

And where those flowers were freshest and
most fair

The maiden sat, and one with youth's
smooth brow,

Dark and yet beautiful—sat also there.

They met at first by chance—some fancy
took

A tourist's footstep to a shady lane,
As Eveline sat musing by the brook—

We need not marvel that they met again.
The slender stream that murmured at their
feet

Reflected now two faces—one was sweet,
The other noble, with a look of fire,

That seemed in his companion to
inspire

Already that wild worship, which we see
Bend oft to human deity the knee.

There was a fascination and a spell
About him, that enslaved her but too well.

The self-possessed, insinuating air,
That marks a man to whom the world is
known—

That eloquence of language, rich and
rare,

That voice, persuasive, musical in tone—
And, lastly, those deep eyes that flashed
with light—

Were scarcely gifts her maiden heart could
slight.

So as he spoke her deep eyes she would
raise,

And gaze on him with childhood's artless
gaze,

That fears no scrutiny, and knows no sin.
The while he watched that open face,
therein

To read each new idea and passing
thought,

That in their yet unsullied loveliness,
Though free as air, unstable and self-
taught,

Were such as angels might have dared
confess.

He read that unto him the power was
given

Of forming her young mind—the power to
make

A pure and tender spirit fit for heaven,
Or chained to sin and sorrow for
his sake.

Alas! her fate is common—the world
hears

Of such too often to be moved to tears.
Our glance may scarcely linger as we pass,
Our footsteps pause not as we hasten by

The very mound of stones and untrimmed
grass,

Beneath whose weight a broken heart
may lie.

Not yet he spoke of love, but rather led
 Her fancy by the tales of old romance;
 And over all the glow of love he shed,
 By tender accent and impassioned glance.
 Or with an altered look and graver tone,
 He told her of the far-famed Indian war;
 Spoke of the victories led by him alone,
 Till Eveline looked up to him with awe.
 Next changed the subject, with a ready
 wile,
 To paint the beauties of the sea and
 land;
 So made her weep with him, or sigh, or
 smile,
 Till heart and soul were both at his
 command.
 And oft he gathered wild flowers of the
 field,
 Or pulled such mosses as the forests yield,
 And sat down at her feet to show how
 fair,
 How wonderful in form and hue they
 were.
 Then, lastly, as the evening hours grew
 dim,
 And cottage lights were gleaming from
 afar,
 He wooed her to remain and watch with
 him,
 While he would name to her each gentle
 star,
 That when the shades of night fell dark
 and low,
 Came forth into the cool and placid sky;
 And as the leaves above them shook,
 even so
 Shook Eveline beneath her lover's eye.

'Tis known not what the village matrons
 said,
 It may be that the lovers used to meet
 Where boughs hung closely round and
 overhead,
 So none had penetrated their retreat.
 'Tis certain that her lover's noble name
 The maiden never breathed—the modest
 shame
 That flushed a cheek so generally pale,
 Re-closed her lips when trembling with
 the tale.
 What need had she of counsellor or aid,
 How could it be a sin that she was loved
 By one who seemed a god on earth, and
 made
 To glorify the world in which he moved?

Ah! they alone, whose true love knew no
 strife,
 Who trusted with a trust that could not
 fail,
 Can dream how sunny must have been her
 life,
 That one short period of her mournful tale.
 We mark too often by our sighs and tears,
 The changing seasons of our life's few
 years;
 To her, Time had no changes, save in this,
 That each day brought a fuller cup of
 bliss.
 'Twas often said that never English year
 Had boasted skies more beautiful or clear.
 The spring was full of blackthorn and of
 may—
 The summer had a brilliant Southern
 look—
 And flowers sprang up beside the village
 way,
 And water-lilies blossomed in the brook,
 Until the streams and woods were studded
 o'er
 With glorious plants that none had seen
 before!
 To them—the youthful lovers—each new
 day
 Brought forth some pleasure dearer than
 the last,
 And as each gorgeous evening stole away,
 More like a dream of fairyland it passed.
 Yet the Elysium of that summer air
 Dwelt not to them within the flowers or
 skies,
 The spell that breathed such strange en-
 chantment there,
 Spoke in the tender glances of their eyes.

The summer grew more sultry, and the
 flowers
 Drooped their pale blossoms in the hot
 noontide,
 And waited patiently for evening hours,
 Ere, bathed by the cool dew-drops, they
 revived.
 And, languid as the flowers, the maiden
 sat,
 Beneath the graceful willows of the brook,
 While o'er her face she drew her rustic
 hat,
 To hide it from her lover's ardent look.
 For lo! he speaks to her of love, and now
 She turns away from him, but draws her
 breath

In thick and heavy sobs, while her young
 brow
 One moment flushes, then is pale as death.
 He spoke first of the world that lay
 around,
 Like some vast dream, the spot in which
 she dwelt;
 And told her therein Faith was never
 found,
 That Love was but a phantom—seen—not
 felt.
 He said that there the laws of man en-
 thrall'd,
 And urged to guilt the true, devoted soul;
 Until his listener, trembling and appalled,
 Sank at his feet and wept without
 control.
 Then, in the tenderest tones of Love's
 own voice,
 He drew, in specious lights, what Love
 might be,
 Bound by no law save that of its own
 choice,
 Warm as the sunbeams are, and not less
 free.
 And murmured such a love as this would
 make
 Her present home a paradise below,
 Where he would live and die for her
 sweet sake,
 So that her heart no human grief should
 know.
 Something in accents tremulously sweet
 She answered, whose low, thrilling words
 were sighed—
 Scarce spoken—but we need not here
 repeat
 All that he said, or all that she replied.
 Enough!—by those persuasive tones
 o'ercome,
 The inward voice that might have warned
 was dumb.
 As in some fairy dream her mind was
 tossed,
 She listened—hesitated—and was lost.

Time passed—the autumn months were
 on the wane,
 Still her delirious love, with all its trust,
 Ruled her too loving heart and dreamy
 brain—
 Not yet had she awakened—as all must.
 So one calm evening, as the sun went
 down
 Behind the great unfathomable wood,

Now rich with autumn's hues of red and
 brown,
 As side by side the two young lovers
 stood,
 A musical, though trembling, voice was
 heard
 To break upon that forest sanctitude,
 More gently than the wood-notes of a bird,
 When evening's light grows pallid and
 subdued.
 "Beloved! I am too happy. I have said
 Even in my childhood that the world was
 fair,
 When I have watched the blue heavens
 o'er my head,
 And thought that I saw angels in the air.
 And mine was then a lonely life—but
this—
 It is too much—I suffer from such bliss."

She lifted to her lover her pale face—
 Earnest and pale it was, and even a trace
 Of passionate and burning tears was
 there—
 Her joy was greater than her heart could
 bear.
 Then, as she met his answering gaze, it
 shook
 Her very frame—that long and loving
 look—
 Blending his ardent soul in hers, as though
 It never more could part therefrom below.

"And yet, dear life, one sad and
 tender fear
 Breathes on my spirit even now, and here.
 There is a doom from which no love can
 save—
 It may be—long before *thy* hour of rest—
 That form may lie within the spoiling
 grave
 Which now thou claspest closely to thy
 breast.
 Ah me! it would be happier far to die
 Together—thus—beneath this glorious sky
 Than so to leave thee—weeping and
 alone—
 For who could comfort thee if I were
 gone!"

"Mine Eveline, thy thoughts are much
 too sad.
 Dear one! while youth is on thy brow be
 glad!
 Sit down upon this mossy bank, that we

May watch the rising of the autumn moon ;
How strangely dear hast thou become to
me !

These hours of evening ever pass too soon.
Hush ! is it not the nightingale ? That
song

Hath never sounded sweeter than to-
night—

Each note that on the breeze is borne
along,

Is like the voice of some unseen delight.
Oh ! let us sit and dream away the hour ;
The thoughts it brings us are beyond our
reach

In the broad daylight, and they still
o'erpower—

We do but mar them by our human
speech.

I only ask—I only pray to dwell
Through life beside thee, gazing on thy
brow ;

To clasp thee—thus—and feel thy bosom
swell

For ever with the same warm love as
now.”

Her moment's grief was o'er, her heart
was calm,

No doubts disturbed the gentle head that
lay

Confidingly and fondly on his arm—
So passed that long-remembered eve away.

CANTO II.

NIGHT, dull and starless, fell upon the
world.

The earth lay motionless, the air was chill
And heavy with the wintry mists that
curled,

In huge fantastic shapes, o'er wood and
hill.

The village homes looked tenantless and
dark—

The hour was early—yet their lights were
out ;

The very watch-dogs held their usual bark,
For neither voice nor footstep was about.

The same strange lifeless silence—far and
near—

Seemed brooding o'er the forest and the
plain ;

The only sound that ever met the ear
Was, now and then, the gentle plash of
rain,

That trickled slowly from the cottage eaves,
And formed upon the path its baby floods,
Then fell with sharper sound upon the
leaves,

The fallen leaves, of the now barren woods.

That cheerless night, beside a dying
fire,

A mourner sat—in negligent attire ;
Not in a widow's robes her form was clad—
Her look was rather wild than simply sad.
It was not death she mourned—a grief
like that

With less of sternness on her face had sat.
No ray of hope lit up her heavy brow,
But languidly the eyelids rose and fell
O'er her dim sunken eyes—expressing now
That self-abasement words can never tell.
And oh ! as seen in that unsteady light,
No human pen could have portrayed a
form

More spectral, or a face more deadly
white,

While yet the pulses of the heart were
warm.

A letter lay beside her—freshly writ,
The ink whereof appeared but barely dry ;
No tears had fallen there and blotted it,
No outward sign of anguish met the eye ;
Yet scrutiny more careful might have told
How much her frame was shaken as she
wrote ;

Its crooked characters betrayed what cold
And trembling fingers had inscribed the
note.

EVELINE'S LETTER.

“ Once more I write to thee—alas ! once
more

I pray for pity vainly asked before.
My heart is weary of its violence—
I now am calm and even resigned, and
hence

I trace these lines, that in my altered
mood

Their words may touch thee and be under-
stood.

Thine image is beside me still, and
nought

Can drive it thence, though bright and
pure no more ;

Yet I will own to thee that I have
thought

I judged too kindly of thy heart before.

It was not well of thee to leave me thus—
Nor by my shame and frightful anguish
moved;

Oh! that the cold grave had divided us,
And not thy colder heart, my still
beloved!

And yet I write not to reproach—nay, I
Have often thought it sweeter far to die
Than live to loathe thy memory and thy
name:

'Tis I—not thou—that have been most to
blame.

But abject in my misery I implore
That thou wilt write to me one little line—
One word of gentleness—I ask no more—
'Twere useless to demand what once was
mine,

Thy heart's warm love—I know that this
is lost,

I—that once deemed it of myself a part.

Ah! words can never tell thee what it
cost

To tear that fond delusion from my
heart.

But this is retribution well deserved—
Against which it were sinful to rebel;
Nay, rather retribution I had nerved
My heart to bear with patiently and well.
If I alone might be the sacrifice,
I would not murmur at the kind decree,
But unrepining veil my guilty eyes,
And go where none again should hear of
me.

I do remember I once made a vow
To suffer well and murmur not, but now
I cannot wrestle longer with despair—
Oh God! *not I alone* this shame must
bear."

The rest was scarcely legible, defaced
By blotches here, and there so feebly
traced.

And yet no word of kindness in reply
Even to that sad appealing letter came.
He had forsaken—left her there to die,
Or bear, as best she could, her grief and
shame.

'Tis possible he gave a false address,
At least our charity may hope thus much
That fearing lest the tale of her distress
Too inconveniently his heart might
touch,

He was content in ignorance to rest—
So banished her sweet image from his
breast!

Reluctantly and slowly from the earth
Now disappeared the dazzling robe of
snow,

Whose late, unusual fall had checked the
birth

Of all the flowers that March and April
know.

That spring indeed was marvellously cold,
The new-born lambkins died within the
fold.

Yet something like a cheerful sunlight
smiled

Upon a face and head most sad and sweet,
That bent in prayer above an infant child,
Now slumbering in a cradle at her feet.
The languor of long sickness was
expressed

In eyes that looked yet unresigned to fate,
A sense of lassitude that was not rest,
But rather overpowered her with its
weight.

A stupor, too, was on her brow, as though
Her mind had wrestled with its frightful
woe,

And from that conflict—terrible and rude,
Came forth—not lost—but utterly subdued.
Nay—yet not utterly—for when her glance
Rested upon her infant's countenance,
A something of her former self returned—
Her dull eye lost its fixed and vacant gaze,
A soul once more in its expression burned,
Whose tenderness was that of happier
days.

But oh! too often after this there came
A strange reaction o'er that shattered frame,
That shook with the fierce combat waged
within,

Until you wondered if the better part
Of that once pure and gentle mind would
win,

Or leave her but a wrecked and hardened
heart.

It was upon the morn of which we spoke,
Ere yet her infant from its slumber woke,
That in a tremulous and solemn tone,
So unlike the sweet bird-notes once her
own,

She sang a song, or rather hymn, whose
first

Calm words had done but little to prepare
A listener for the overpowering burst
Of mad, despairing grief that closed her
prayer.

Yet blame her not—a heart so tender must,

When wronged where it has placed its
holiest trust,
From all its human joys and hopes shut
out,
Have its dark season of despair and
doubt;
Ere the sad eyes that tears and passion
blind,
Their only safe and home-bound path shall
find.

"I thank Thee, O my God,
That Thou hast breathed upon my heart
again,
And turned away the reckless steps that
trod
The downward path from whence return is
vain.

"It was but now I prayed
That Thou would'st end my sorrow and
my sin;
Despair my heart so wild and hardened
made,
I dreaded life, and saw no hope therein.

"My head was bowed with shame,
I dared not lift from earth my heavy eyes;
I even feared to call upon Thy Name,
Lest Thou Thy guilty suppliant should'st
despise.

"Oh! pity and forgive
The heart that knew Thee not except
through fear,
And hear the voice that now implores to
live,
That it may yet perform its mission here.

"My Father, if Thou wilt
Chastise me heavily—Thy will be done.
But ah! let not my error and my guilt
Fall on the fair head of my little one.

"I ask Thee but for this—
Not selfishly before Thee now I kneel—
Imploring not my faded youth or bliss,
Or praying Thee my broken heart to heal.

"No! but with burning tears
And supplicating hands entreating Thee
That I may guard mine infant's future
years,
And save her from the fate that mine must
be.

"My God! my God! I hear
Thy awful voice from the vast heavens
reply—
It falls like thunder on my mortal ear;
Thou dost refuse my prayer; then let me
die!

"Thou say'st I am unfit—
Dishonoured—stained and lost—for such a
task;
I know Thee wise, yet can I not submit;
'Tis mercy and not justice that I ask."

She clasped her hands upon her
throbbing breast,
Lest her deep sobs should break her
infant's rest;
Then hastened wildly from the spot and
flung

Her tender form upon the cottage floor.
Oh! it was sad for one so fair and young
To lie and pray that she might rise no
more!

It was not till a weary time had passed,
That something like a purer, holier vein
Of feeling brought a gush of tears at last,
To calm her heart and soothe her fevered
brain.

And hushing in her arms her waking
child,

That melancholy voice was heard once
more,

A song more sweet and gentle, and less
wild,

Upon the peaceful morning air to pour.

"Lullaby, Lullaby,
Dear one—rest!
Pillow thy head on my yearning breast,
For never, oh! never, shall sleep like this
Revisit thine eyes in after years,
The fond warm touch of thy mother's kiss,
Will have changed, on thy tender cheek,
to tears.

"Lullaby, Lullaby,
Soft and deep
Falleth the shade of thy infant sleep.
Like a veil that a summer evening throws
On the tranquil brow of the parting day,
So deepens the calm of thy pure repose,
Till the light of thy face hath passed away.

"Lullaby, Lullaby,
Ne'er below
Shall thy mother again such slumber know,

Or the holiness of a peace like thine
Return to her worn and weary brain.
Thy dreams are the dreams of Eden—mine
Are now but the echoes of waking pain.

“Lullaby, Lullaby,
Yet no more

From the mercy of Heaven my lips
implore,
Than to guard from thy sweet young life
the blight
On the guilty brow of thy mother cast;
'Tis the prayer that I breathe by day, by
night—
'Tis the prayer that in death will be
fondest—last!”

Beneath a cypress in the churchyard
green,
One eve was raised a white and simple
stone;
There, as the sun shone calmly on the
scene,
A mourner knelt—forsaken and alone.
Oh! marvel not her brow was pale and
sad—
Beneath that fresh and myrtle-planted
mould
Was laid the last—the only friend she
had—
A friend whose dying words were harsh
and cold.
And yet that stern and “virtuous reproof”
Was not for sinning lips like hers to blame;
She, who so long had dwelt beneath the
roof
Of that once kind and gentle-hearted
dame,
Had brought but dark dishonour and
distress
Within its simple tenement of late—
Ah! it was well deserved, yet not the less
Heart-breaking to be left thus desolate.
It was the severing of the only link
That bound her to the outer world, and
she,
When evening's purple sun began to sink,
No longer knew where aid or hope might
be.
She could not seek for sympathy among
The homes where she was welcomed once
with pride;
The old would shake their heads at her,
the young
Shrink with disgust or pity from her side.

Such were the maddening thoughts that
now passed o'er
The mind that struggled with their course
no more.
Her brain became bewildered, and
possessed
Of but one longing—the desire for rest.

There was within the woods a mimic
lake,
Whose depth was hidden by green moss
and weeds,
Down o'er its edges fell the briar and
brake,
Tangling their branches in obnoxious reeds.
There, with infatuation strange and wild,
She often came, and brought her infant
child,
To gaze, as with a fascinated eye,
Upon its most unfathomable part,
And find it each day harder to deny
The urgent pleadings of her guilty heart.
'Twould be so sweet her aching eyes to
close
Upon a world that she had loved too well;
To know again the charms of a repose
Which dreams could not affright, or tears
dispel;
And sweeter still to know that none could
sever
Her infant from her; folded to her breast
They would be then together, and for ever,
At least in peace—if wept not, and unblest.

The moon was rising far behind a wood,
That looked gigantic in its partial light,
The hour that by an open casement stood
A pale and wasted figure clothed in white.
Her hands were clasped—the gaze of her
dark eye
Was fixed upon her childhood's scenes, that
lay
Beneath the midnight calmness of that sky,
And scarcely looked less lovely than by
day.
Something like holiness was breathing
there,
That would have moved another mind to
prayer;
And often through the unclosed lattice
came
That strange—sweet perfume—never called
by name,
That sometimes steals among our earthly
bowers,

As though it had been shed by angel wings.

Howe'er this be, we know that there are hours

When earth is teeming with unearthly things—

And this was one of them; but she whose look

Was thereon bent as with the gaze of death,

Felt not its influence, nor moved, nor shook;

Some ghastly purpose froze her very breath.

Hush! hush! she moves—a deep and holy charm

Lies in the wailing of that infant child; She raises it upon her nerveless arm,

Though gazing still with troubled looks and wild,

Till on a pillow softer than its own It rests its head, and stays its little moan.

Thank Heaven! this baby confidence, within

The breast that was a mother's still, awoke A keener sense of her intended sin

Than if the voice of an Archangel spoke. She clasped it to her bosom with a cry,

That, like her troubles, found no listening ear,

Yet met, perchance, a sympathy on high, Which human charity refuses here.

Morn glimmered—but its first grey hours were spent

In timid prayers for pardon and for aid, That from a mind most penitent were sent,

To One to Whom none such have vainly prayed.

For now some hope seemed on her mind to dawn,

That filled her darkened eye again with light—

The calmness of some holy purpose, born Even in the fearful travail of that night.

Then broke the morn, as one, tear-worn and pale,

Yet tranquillised by some now fixed intent, Took the green footpath leading from the vale—

Bearing her sleeping infant as she went. No step was heard abroad—the frost lay still

Upon the unpressed violets, and the rays Of sunrise just appeared above the hill,

As Eveline turned back her parting gaze. Ne'er had it seemed more lovely in her sight,

As, feeling that it was her last farewell, She shaded from her face the sun's red light,

That she might see the home she loved so well.

Though earth could scarcely boast a fairer spot,

Not this, but memories that were therein shrined,

Gave unto it a charm it else had not, And made it a lost Eden to her mind.

She had been once the pride, too, of that place,

Both for her winning ways and sweet young face,

And for her girlhood's innocence and bloom—

Now buried, like her love, in one dark tomb.

She went forth as an outcast on her way, No one befriending her, though she might pray

That she might find—what they would have denied—

A place wherein her broken heart to hide. Alas! for us, who, judging of the sin,

Deny the pardon that *we* hope to win; Who, hearing not the victim's piteous tale,

Turn from the prayer of her imploring eye, And coldly shut her from our social pale,

To find without no friend or home, and die!

CANTO III.

ONE, with the seal of sorrow on her face, Claspings a sickly infant to her breast,

Through a great city went with weary pace, As crimson daylight faded in the west.

That brilliant glow reflected from above But now, on lofty tower and monument,

Had vanished gently, as the smile of love, So slowly and reluctantly it went.

And timidly the moon, that had so long Awaited the departure of the day,

Gave forth her light—that hourly grew more strong,

Till all the city glistened in its ray. While, almost imperceptibly, the hum

Of life in the metropolis died out, So left it unto prayer and sleep, though some

Who had no homes to seek, were still about.
 Even these at last retired with weary feet,
 To choose some covered court wherein to lie,
 And left the lonely watchman on his beat,
 To count the stars that lit the narrow sky.
 Then she, who had been latest of the late,
 Regarding not that she was all alone,
 Went slowly through a mansion's open gate,
 And sat down on its noble steps of stone—
 Silent and chilly. None disturbed her there,
 But left her to her bitter thoughts, or prayer.

Aye! none disturbed her there—for there were few
 Among that city's myriads, who knew
 No spot, however rude, wherein to rest
 The head that vice or poverty oppressed.
 Yet nothing like complaint or anguish dwelt
 In eyes that wept o'er selfish griefs no more;
 Disgrace—neglect—were now no longer felt,
 The struggle with her heart's despair was o'er.
 And she had won! Submissive to her fate
 Her look—though not rejoicing—was serene;
 Though lonely—cold—forsaken—desolate—
 Her heart was calmer than it long had been.
 Not all the ravages by sorrow made,
 Had marred a certain beauty in that face;
 A light that yet no sickness seemed to fade—
 A sweetness no unkindness could efface.
 And purified and chastened from her sin,
 She dared look forward now with hope, beyond
 A world so fair without—so foul within—
 From which her soul was breaking its last bond.
 Once only—when her trembling hand undid
 The shawl that wrapt her babe with scanty fold,
 Tears dimmed her eyes and fringed each drooping lid,
 Then fell, as though they would not be controlled.

And long and fondly on its face she gazed,
 Where Death had but too plainly set his seal—
 But uttered no complaint, although she raised
 Her eyes to heaven as with a last appeal.

The summer of that year had left again
 The warm green earth another season old,
 As through the broad street and the narrow lane,
 Both day and night that hapless wanderer strolled.
 And yet to her that summer brought no sign—
 For what in that great world could meet her gaze,
 Except the sky became less clear and fine,
 Or early lamplight spoke of shortened days?
 Alas! her mission yet was unfulfilled,
The lost came not—though day succeeding day
 She scanned each passing face, one moment thrilled
 With hope—then turning—sickening—away.
 Yet long and fondly to that hope she clung—
 Love's last—most strong—possession in the mind,
 She once so passionate, and still so young,
 Grieved much ere this one dream could be resigned.
 Then when its cruel and bitter trial was o'er,
 She raised her eyes to God—earth-bound no more.

No one molested her—they passed her by
 Most frequently with cold or vacant eye.
 None spoke to her in accents coarse or rude;
 The little babe that to her bosom clung—
 Her look—her step—so quiet and subdued,
 Guarded from insult or licentious tongue.
 Some few that passed her even again would turn,
 As by a sudden impulse moved, to give
 The pittance that she had not strength to earn;
 'Twas little—scarce enough whereon to live.
 In truth her cheek—so hollow and so pale,
 Told but too well starvation's horrid tale.

Yet with her thin and bony hand she took
The well-meant offering with a grateful
look.

It was enough to hush her infant's cry—
The rest must follow soon—and with a
sigh

That even a martyr could not have
repressed,

She clasped her loved one closer to her
breast.

* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *

Far o'er the meadows sounds the
pleasant low

Of cattle, and the goatherd's rugged song;
The peasant leaves his work with footsteps
slow

And weary—musing as he strolls along.

The shepherd lingers in the fields awhile,
Returning not upon his homeward way
Till he has prophesied, from sunset's smile,
The cloud or brightness of the coming day.
The fine and plenteous harvest of that
year

Is gathered from the earth—the golden
grain

Lies treasured in the barns, that scatter
near

The villages and hamlets of the plain.
And far away as human eye can reach,
Through the green pastures flows a gentle
stream,

Now shadowed by some solitary beech,
Now dancing gaily in the bright sunbeam—
While over all the wide and rich expanse
Of hill and meadow-grass, and wooded
lands,

Uplifting its grey, time-worn countenance,
The castle of an English noble stands!

The fair young heiress of these vast
domains

Is tempted by the softness of the hour,
And wanders with her lover o'er the
plains,

Till lost within a distant autumn bower.
Thy life hath known no troubles, and thy
years

As yet have been unmarred by care or
tears—

No grief was ever known thy breast to swell
With early bitterness, young Isabel!

And yet, this beautiful and tranquil eve
There is a sadness in thy lustrous eye—
Thy snowy bosom seems to fall and heave,
As if disturbed by an unwonted sigh.

Alas! upon her lover's brow a cloud
Is falling like the darkness of the night:
His lips are deadly pale—his head is
bowed,

His deep eye has a strange and troubled
light.

Too often—even in the festive hall,
That blighting shadow had been seen to
fall,

Though none of his companions seemed to
know

The secret of that dark, mysterious woe
But she, who walks so sadly by his side,
Years his affianced—soon to be his bride,
Had never found it difficult till now
To chase that heavy sternness from his
brow.

Alas! to-night that cold, abstracted air
Scarce seems to recognise that she is there!
'Twas strange that that sweet young face
should still return,

To haunt him with its fixed, reproachful
gaze—

That glance, which seemed his very soul
to burn

With the remembrance of departed days.
Yes—it was strange, but often would a
tone

Of more than ordinary sweetness thrill
His bosom, and recall again that one
Clear bird-like voice that had been
sweeter still.

No other fancy to his heart had clung
So pertinaciously as this—although
Many whom he had wronged had been as
young,

With star-like eyes, and bosoms white as
snow.

She had a beauty which no other had,
A soul of tenderness, most deep and rare.
Oh that he could forget her, for her sad
Pale face seemed gazing on him every-
where!

He started, for the voice of Isabel
Upon his guilty conscience sternly fell!
The air had been so breathless that a bird
Was startled by the strange, unwonted
sound,

Disturbing thus a leaf that next was heard
To join its withered brethren on the
ground.

"Oh! deem *me* not unworthy of thy trust,"
 The lady said, in tones that somewhat shook.
 "Tell me thy secret sorrow, love, why must
 Thy head so oft be clouded by that look?
 My every feeling I confide to thee—
 I do conceal no impulse of my heart;
 It is not well a woe like thine should be,
 In which I have no portion—take no part.
 Give me thy confidence! Nay—wherefore shake
 Thy head as though in anger or disdain?
 I ask not selfishly, but for thy sake—
 I grieve for thee, and fain would ease thy pain.
 Am I not thine? Can aught now sever us?
 Thy trust and confidence — or mine — destroy?
 Say—if this be—what grief consumes thee thus,
 Why is it greater than thy love or joy?"

He turned from her too curious eyes the brow,
 That, pale before, grew even paler now.
 "I have been dreaming," he replied—"no more—
 It was the dark remembrance of a woe—
 A stern affliction—suffered long before
 I met thee"—then, in hollow tones and low,
 He added: "For thy sake I will dismiss
 Henceforth these moody habits of my brain,
 And thou—if thou art wise—will grant me this,
 To probe not thus my inmost thoughts again."

This bitter answer roused the lady's pride—
 Her eyes flashed both with anger and defiance;
 'Twas strange to be so haughtily denied,
 Even now—when she might well expect compliance!
 More white than marble grew that proud young face,
 As some few words—both taunting and constrained—
 She answered him, and then with queen-like pace

Walked onwards till the broad high-road was gained.
 That road went winding through a lordly wood,
 Whose ancient oaks for centuries had stood,
 And o'er the worn pedestrian's weary head
 Their gnarled old branches hospitably spread.
 There—rising from its most remote recess,
 Was heard the gentle cooing of a dove.
 That scene of rich, autumnal loveliness
 But needed this—the voice of peace and love!
 In the green distance herds of deer were seen;
 Some basking idly on a sunny bank,
 Some bounding lightly o'er the mossy green,
 While others paused beside a stream and drank.
 At times, the timid hares would venture out
 Into the sunshine—or a pheasant soar
 From some impervious shades, and wheel about,
 Then drop into their quiet depths once more.
 It is a lovely spot, and well doth he
 Who, all regardless of yet early hours,
 Chooses that yon fair bank his couch shall be,
 So rests his head among the autumn flowers.
 Ah me! it is a *woman's* long, dark hair
 That mingles with the leaves and quaking grass;
 Those white and wasted limbs are partly bare,
 The winds caress them gently as they pass.
 She sleeps—poor lonely wanderer—doth she sleep?
 There seems no motion there of heaving breath—
 That slumber is too perfect—is too deep—
 It is not slumber—it is surely death!
 "Oh! hasten, dearest, ere it be too late,
 Raise her, and bear her to the castle gate."

No words have power to picture what *he* felt,
 Whose horror-stricken heart and guilty eyes—

As by that scarcely breathing form he
kneelt—

Failed not the lost—the wronged—to
recognise.

Clasping an infant to her breast she lay,
Whose cold brow told of death, but not
decay.

When—where—that hapless infant died—or
how,

There is no record left to tell us now.

It may be, when its life was almost o'er,
The mother's thoughts returned to home
once more.

One wish may have been strong within her
soul—

The wish to lay it in its native vale;
At least, it seems, her footsteps sought
that goal,

From early morn till day began to fail.

Alas! how frightfully afar it lay!

The road was long and lonely, and but few
Perchance had succoured her upon her
way,

And day brought showers—with evening
fell the dew.

Who knoweth what she suffered, when the
eyes

Whose failing light would soon be
quenched for ever,

Fixed their last look upon the western
skies,

That lit a home—loved—lost—forgotten
never!

Alas for him! who, gazing on that form,
Felt thus revive the tenderness intense
Which, when the summer days were long
and warm,

Had once inspired his fatal eloquence.

'Twere well the tear of pity even to shed

Upon that brow impure and guilty head.

He gazed as stupefied—nor moved—nor
spoke,

As memory in his maddened brain awoke

Her girlish innocence—her perfect trust—

The love that he had trampled in the dust.

Yea, though so altered by one year of woe,
With tattered garment and dishevelled hair

Veiling alone her wasted breasts of snow—

He felt her dearer—thought her far more
fair—

Than all the daughters of the earth beside.

Forgetting all ambition and all pride,

He raised her—called her each endearing
name

That memory could recall or love could
frame.

Even this was useless—she could hear not
now

The voice that once her very being stirred.

And Isabel looked on, but with a brow

Rigid as death, and uttering not a word.

* * * * *

* * * * *

Another hour of that strange eve steals
by,

Bearing its burden to eternity.

And by an open casement now they lay

Her feeble form—within a spacious room:

'Tis strange—the peaceful closing of her
day—

A life so sad, a death that brings no
gloom.

She lives—but yet is dreaming—her dim
eye

Seems vacantly to watch the twilight's veil

Usurp the place of sunset's golden dye,

Through which, as yet, the stars look dull
and pale.

The earth is fading with a sleepy look,

The hollow cawing of some drowsy rook

Comes hoarsely from some elms, that, tall
and green,

Grow down upon the edge of a ravine.

And far away, a long and lofty chain

Of hills that bound the meadow and the
plain,

With that deep softness only twilight lends,

Its outline with the sky above it blends,

While slowly brightening in that sky's
clear space,

The stars smile down upon the watcher's
face.

Hush! the last notes of wood-birds, sweet
and clear,

That fill the grove with an autumnal
strain,

Are wafted faintly—softly—to her ear—

Music that she may never hear again.

They pause, as evening's last expiring flush

Grows paler, and then fades upon the
sight;

So leaves the earth reposing in the hush,

The breathless hush of a most perfect
night.

'Twere sweet to die in such an hour as
this,

To melt away into a dream of bliss!

And she was dying—for the hand of
 Death
 Upon her marble brow was sternly
 pressed—
 There came at times a painful gasp for
 breath,
 Her misty eye seemed languishing for rest.
 The heart beat fitfully—paused—beat
 again—
 Shapes grew unshaped to her disordered
 brain;
 A sudden breeze that from some distant
 bower
 Brought the sweet perfume of the jasmine
 flower,
 Then raised her hair as with an unseen
 hand,
 To her seemed whispering of a brighter
 land—
 The curtains, as their rich folds slightly
 moved,
 The murmuring voices of the lost and
 loved.

A form bent o'er her—'twas her lover's
 form,
 A hand upon her brow felt kind and warm.
 Alas! her failing eye no more could trace
 The pale and grief-changed features of
 his face.
 But when his ne'er-forgotten voice she
 heard,
 Hoarse—tremulous—yet tender as of yore—
 It seemed as though a long-forgotten
 chord
 Of life responded to its sound once more.
 Yet though she heard him—knew him, and
 around
 His neck her wasted arms she feebly
 wound,
 She could remember not her recent woe;
 Oblivious of all grief, her thoughts
 returned—
 As oft in dreams—to joys that long ago
 So brightly—fondly—in her heart had
 burned!

EVELINE'S VISION.

'Tis summer once again, and where the
 boughs
 Of forest trees droop almost to their feet,
 Two youthful lovers sit—exchanging vows—
 Their trembling hands are clasped, their
 fond eyes meet.

'Tis past the hour of sunset, and behind
 The western hills yon cloud of purple
 fades—

And gently springeth up a low soft wind,
 That woos the green leaves in the forest
 shades.

In the far east, a line of silver hue
 Extends behind the mountain heights, and
 now

The moon is up, and lights a distant view
 Of rock and valley with her broad white
 brow.

A little longer, and that chastened ray
 Is stealing in among the beech-wood stems,
 Kissing the dewy flowers upon its way,
 Until they glisten in its light like gems.
 Next lights the lovers' faces as they sit
 Forgetful of the hour, and watching it!
 While breaking on the solitude around
 A distant song at intervals is heard,
 It hath a strangely wild and joyous sound,
 The clear, sweet singing of that native
 bird!

We call it only earth who thereon gaze,
 With pensive thought and meditative air—
 It is the moon—and we receive its rays
 As sent to cheer our paths of grief and
 care.

To them it is not earth, but Paradise!
 A dwelling meet for perfect love and
 trust,

Warm—deep—as that now melting in their
 eyes,

The love of angels—not of human dust.
 Words had been uttered on that summer
 eve,

Fond—earnest—passionate, and such as
 leave

A memory that can never more depart:
 They echo now within that dreamer's
 heart.

She speaks! her words, though faint, are
 strangely clear,

And fall like thunder on her lover's ear!

“And yet, dear life, one sad and tender
 fear

Breathes on my spirit even now, and here.
 There is a doom from which no love can
 save—

It may be—long before *thy* hour of rest—
 That form may lie within the spoiling
 grave

Which now thou claspest closely to thy
 breast.

Ah me! it would be happier far to die
Together — thus — beneath this glorious
sky,
Than so to leave thee—weeping and
alone—
For who could comfort thee if I were
gone!”

She paused and seemed confused, some
trembling gleams
Of dawning reason struggled with her
mind,
Though, with the sweet bewilderment of
dreams,
Her past and present joys were still
combined.

“’Tis strange! it must be night! I cannot
see
Thy face — I cannot gaze upon thy
brow,
And yet I know that thou art close
to me—
I seemed to see thy loving eyes but
now.

The sky is gone—I thought the stars were
bright;
I feel a numbness and an icy chill
Steal o’er me, like the damp cold dews of
night.

It matters not, for thou art near me still!
Thy trembling hand within mine own I
press,
I feel thy kind and tender arm caress
And clasp me to thy heart — oh!
it is sweet
To feel that heart so fondly—warmly
beat.

‘Beloved! I am too happy. I have said
Even in my childhood that the world was
fair,

When I have watched the blue heavens o’er
my head,
And thought that I saw angels in the air—
And mine was then a lonely life—but *this*—
It is too much—I suffer—from such—
bliss.’”

Faintly and falteringly these accents fell,
Her soul was darkening with its long
eclipse;

None wished that bright delusion to
dispel—

She died with these last words upon her
lips.

END OF EVELINE.

THOUGHTFUL MOMENTS.

THE GRAVES OF THREE BROTHERS.

THE FIRST AND SECOND BROTHERS.

ONE sleeps beneath the wild Atlantic wave,
But records of his resting-place are none;
His desolate and undiscovered grave
Undecked by flowers, unmarked by
gilded stone.

His brother lies beneath the northern pines,
Where rabbits brood and wild doves
build their nests;
Yet not more calmly that cold brow
reclines
Than his who sleeps beneath the
Atlantic crests.

Neither from gloomy vault nor marbled
urn,
Where love may slumber, sin lie un-
confessed,
Can we dare pray our lost ones to return
To life’s wild turmoil or to grief’s unrest.

They have a happier fate than those who
strive
In vain to break the iron prison bars.
Oh, melancholy thought! to pass our lives
So oft in craven peace or bitter wars!

There grief is silent, tears no more are
shed,
Nor hearts sink low beneath their own
sad weight;
Oh, envy thou the slumbers of the dead—
It is the living who are desolate!

Under eternal warfare of the sky,
Or under smiling suns or flower-strewn
sod,
It matters little where our bones may lie,
So that our souls return from thence to
God.

THE THIRD BROTHER.

Neither beneath the ocean’s crest,
Nor where the pine trees’ shadows fall,
My third young brother takes his rest,
But by an abbey’s noble wall.

His slender, wasted form they lay
 'Mid long green grass and pale wild
 flowers,
 Where sun-dials point the hour of day,
 And warn us of our wasted hours.*

Full of a gentle, kindly wit,
 He was the genial friend of all—
 For none were e'er unkindly hit,
 No malice from *his* lips could fall!

Where tall grass waves and daisies grow,
 'Neath winter's storms or summer's skies,
 He waits the day, that none may know,
 When Heaven's own voice shall bid us
 rise.

What suns may rise—what suns may set—
 Howe'er apart their graves may lie,
 One faithful friend will ne'er forget
 The brothers of a day gone by!

TO DR. D——.

THEY listen for his footsteps on the stairs—
 To them distinct through all the city's
 hum,
 Hushing their painful sighs, heart-broken
 prayers,
 To count those footfalls as they nearer
 come!

And sadly, as he bends above the bed,
 They wait for words of comfort from his
 lips;
 Death shuts the fatal wings so darkly
 spread,
 And Life smiles out behind her black
 eclipse.

His soothing hand relieves the racking
 pain,
 Wipes the cold death-damp from the
 haggard face,
 Brings hope and peace to the o'er-
 troubled brain,
 And stays pale Death in his too-rapid
 pace.

No wonder that they bless him as he leaves
 The darkened bedroom and its fevered
 air;

The saddened brow, the bitter heart that
 grieves,
 Are happier, better, for his presence
 there.

Ever serene and calm himself, he goes,
 Heedless of place and time, where duty
 calls;
 Be it to soothe the mightiest monarch's
 woes,
 Or suffering penury in prison walls.

He, too, hath suffered, though his brow is
 calm;
 Grief, sickness, pain, are not to him
 unknown;
 But he, from whom so many seek their
 balm,
 Seeks from on High the solace for his
 own.

LINES TO MY LOVE.

MINE own true love! from the first hour I
 clasped
 Thy firm and gentle hand, the magic touch
 Was even as though my future life I
 grasped—
 A life of hope, although I feared it much!
 Thou wilt not leave me—if thou dost I die!
 Thou can'st not leave me—let the hours
 pass by,
 And count them not for happiness, nor
 sorrow,
 Remembering only, there is yet to-morrow!

That strange To-morrow—Oh! I fear it less
 Than earthly days that darken and depress,
 Without a silver lining to the cloud,
 Or lifting of the head that grief hath
 bowed.

My heart is full of love—of tender pride,
 Although my days are passed not by thy
 side; †
 For where thou goest I can rarely go,
 Not mine the power to heal or soften woe!
 I cannot thank thee, oh, thou best
 beloved—
 To me the truest, purest among men—
 Nor can I paint thee, with my heart so
 moved,
 Either by eloquence of lips or pen.

* There were two fine old sundials in the ancient churchyard of St. Albans.

† Referring to his being engaged in practice while she lay ill in bed.

But I will wait for thee, Life's latest
hours—
Age shall not alter me, or Grief's weird
powers;
Knowing that from the first bright hour we
met,
I lost the right to freedom—to forget!

No human power our hands' true clasp
shall sever—
Love, whilst thou livest I am thine for
ever.
Nay! nor in future realms mine eyes can
see
A life, a state, that is not passed with
thee!

OLD-FASHIONED PRAISES BY A LOVER OF SUMMER.

OH, summer flowers are fresh and fair,
And summer skies are bright, I ween,
To those that leave the City air,
To wander in the woodland scene!

For beautiful it is to be
By rippling stream and bending tree,
To leave the dull and crowded street
For leafy bough and blossom sweet,
To watch the graceful deer bound by,
With footstep light and sparkling eye,
The timid hare, with frightened look,
Steal from the shade of its own nook.
Oh, summer flowers, etc.

For beautiful it is to see
The sun rise o'er the dusky lea,
To watch it pierce the tangled shade
Of coppice dark or briary glade,
Glistening in each bright drop of dew
That hangs upon the harebell blue—
Pouring its cheerful light o'er all,
Unchecked by tower or city wall.
Oh, summer flowers, etc.

For sweet it is at close of day
To stroll through woods with twilight grey,
Or when the moon is looking down
Through graceful ash, or beech tree brown,
To hear the dove coo in the glen,
The wildcock cry from marshy fen,
The pheasant, from its evening rest,
The moor-fowl from their rushy nest.

For summer flowers are fresh and fair,
And summer skies are bright, I ween,
To those that leave the City air,
To wander in the woodland scene.

TREASURED MEMORIES.

OH, ye past days, so anxious yet so dear,
Full of a countless list of tender stories—
With shifting lights of hope, of joy, of
fear,
I would not change ye for a world of
glories!

Our little ones!—across the chequered past
I see their tiny figures gaily flit,
Fair human memories that the longest
last—
Gay with the pretty laugh of childish wit!

I care but little what the dull world seems,
It costs no pang its trivial ties to sever,
So that my early loves come back in
dreams—
Bright sunlit joys that will be joys for
ever.

No envy, with its sharp envenomed stings,
No hateful spite can this sweet past
destroy—
For Memory hath a world of gracious
things
The vilest tongue is powerless to destroy!

They cannot hush the gentle, tender
voices,
With all their merry laughter—infant
cries,
There is no human spell my heart rejoices,
Like the sweet spell of childhood's
mystic eyes!

There may lie grander treasures at our
feet,
And wealth or glory be within our call,
And friends may flatter—flattery is sweet!
But one dear, childish lisp outweighs
them all—

One childish lisp—*Mamma*—no angel tone
Can thrill the heart as that one tone can
thrill,

That little word—that one—is all mine
own,
Its first, soft accents are remembered
still!

And oh! I pity with a thousand pities,
Those who in such sweet music have no
part,
Not for the treasures of Ind's fabled cities
Would I yield up these treasures of my
heart!

*Bournemouth,
September 12th, 1880.*

DESPAIRING WORDS.

(Originally part of "Eveline.")

I CANNOT hear where thou art dwelling
now,
'Tis seldom that I even hear thy name—
Grief, since I met thee, may have seared
thy brow,
Or it may still be fair yet not the same!
But when recalling thy pale countenance,
And dreaming of thy deep and pensive eye,
'Tis as when first I met its thrilling glance,
Though years since then—long years have
fleeted by.
Thy voice—it may be gentle now no more—
Thy vision now be dim—thy very heart
May be so changed from all I knew before,
I scarce could love the thing that now thou
art!
Or it may be that yet a sterner seal
Than Grief's, upon thy brow has been
impressed,
And all that once could breathe and move
and feel,
Now shrouded lies in its last dreamless
rest;
And Hope's own flickering star, whose
cheering ray
Still lingered, when all else had passed
away—
Dark homes of sorrow to illumine yet—
That last lone star of love and life hath
set!

I watched it as it faded—night by night,
Hour after hour I watched its waning light,
And sighed to think the fitful gleam it
gave,
But glimmered, as a lamp within the grave,

To light the very dead with its wild glare
And show the depth of desolation there!
'Tis gone! and I am lonelier than before.
Joy hath no promise—Life no pleasure
more,
Except that even thy very name be lost,
And buried with the suffering it has cost.
Thou had'st been but too fondly cherished
—thou
Wert—all to me—but must be—nothing
now!

I never watched the deepening of
twilight,
I never looked out on the sky at night,
To calm the anguish of mine aching brow,
But something even then—I knew not how
Or why it came—some sympathetic tone
Came back, as though an echo of thine
own,
And brought me that wild swell of loving
thought,
No tones but *thy* deep tones, have ever
brought,

Oh! yet must I forget thee—was it
wrong
To cherish thee, as I have done so long?
And must I turn from all that I have
loved,
Or look upon it coldly and unmoved—
Feeling the desolation and the chill
Within — without — and yet concealing
still!
I *must* forget thee, even although my
heart
Breaks with the chains that it would rend
apart,
I must forget thee still—aye, even forget
That hour—that hapless hour, when first
we met!

I write not now as I have done before,
With one yet lingering hope to meet thee
more.
No! that wild dream is past—I buried
all
Before my hand could trace this hurried
scrawl.
Farewell—farewell—and never over thee,
May come the shadow that o'ershadows
me.
A light is gone that nothing can restore,
The dream of day, the midnight watch is
o'er!

IMPROMPTU ADDRESS TO CALUMNY.

O CALUMNY! thou cruel and poisonous
snake,

That crawls from filthy swamp, or nettled
brake—

O Calumny! upon whose hateful trail
The fruit falls rotted and the flowers grow
pale—

None can escape thy snares—the meanest
—least—

Who crawl life's thoroughfares—the holiest
priest

Who prays within his cell—secure—alone—
Nor even a monarch on the proudest
throne!

None can escape thee! not the noblest
fame,

The humblest footsteps or the loftiest
name.

And heads revered must meet thy dastard
blow,

Nor brow escape that shall be pure as
snow!

The mother, bending o'er her dying son,
The knight whose laurels had been hardly
won,

The maiden and her lover—even the child
Thy foul and falsest slanders have defiled!

Who hath not known thee? who, however
pure,

From thy degrading shadow is secure?
Who hath not been with noble anger
stirred

When first thy vile and loathsome voice he
heard?

Insidious, crawling viper! on thy track
There is no marching forwards, or yet
back.

More wary than the fox and far more vile,
For Reynard bites, but Slander wears a
smile!

Thou meanest worm! who would compas-
sion feel,

When placing on thy head his hardest
heel?

None than thyself more shameless words
have spoken,
None than thyself more sinless hearts have
broken.

There is no spot where Poverty is sure,
No hearth where truth and honour are
secure—

No home where Calumny hath not its
berth—

Heaven is exempt, but never man—on
Earth!

POEMS BY "THE SAD SEA WAVES."

NEAR THE HOARSE WATERS OF THE DEEP.

NEAR the hoarse waters of the deep
There is a grey and crumbling stone,
Memorial of the solemn sleep
Of one who lived and died alone.

And when the moon is on the wave,
When idle strangers haunt it not,
A step is by that lonely grave,
A voice is in that silent spot!

I would not stranger hearts should know—

I would not stranger hearts should see,
The heavy agony of woe

That I, so long, have borne for thee.
So fondly though our hearts were knit
None ever read it on thy brow,

For thou hast lived, concealing it—
Then none shall ever know it now!

I heard it from the Red Indian's land,
That thou wert life and love's no more—
I did not strike him with mine hand,

Who first that fatal tidings bore—
But listened—till the worst I heard,
Then turned away without a word,
Nor wept thee with a single tear,
Though thou had'st been so deeply dear!

Alas! it is not words can tell

How heavily the heart may swell—

For there is a dark depth of woe
For which the tears can rarely flow.

And tears will sometimes fill the eye
And flow, and yet we scarce know why,

While grief may be too fixed and dark,
For sigh to speak, or sob to mark.

Why was I not beside thee, when
The throes of sickness shook thy frame—
Thou know'st I had no fear of men.
I loved thee not with love so tame,
I never feared but for thy sake
That they might look on and condemn,
And if my heart should ever break,
It will not break through fear of them!

Not, love—that, uselessly, thy name
Should ever lightly uttered be,
In tones of pity or of blame—
Although that blame were linked with me.
But oh! in love so deep as ours,
Had I but watched thy life's decline,
I might have soothed its parting hours—
So grief, alone, had not been thine!

It may be anguish to have gazed
Upon the dark eyes of the loved,
To our own glance once fondly raised,
And now so vacant and unmoved—
But deeper anguish to have known
That they had suffered—died—*alone*,
And we had not beside them knelt,
To soothe the sorrow they had felt!

'Twas well to bury thee, beside
The quiet moaning of the tide—
To bury thee where all is bright
And beautiful within our sight—
For wild flowers of the sea-beach grow
Around thy tomb, and knowing not
The wasted form concealed below,
Cluster in joy around the spot!

For thou wert lovely, and should be
Where loveliness around may dwell—
I would not they had buried thee
Within a cloister's vaulted cell
With bones not kindred; it was meet
To bury thee where all is sweet,
And all around thy grave is rife
That thou most deeply loved in life!

Sleep calmly where thou art—I will
Watch on through life's long pilgrimage,
Thy last dear wishes to fulfil—
And none shall ever read the page
Of Life that thou did'st from them hide,
So slumber on—for none shall chide—

The very stars will vigil keep
Above a form so kindred—Sleep!

For thou wert even as one of them
That in another sphere had birth,
Whose ray, though from so bright a gem,
Could pierce not the dark spots of earth.
And men looked up to thee with praise,
So constant was thy smile—because
Though tracing not their darker ways,
Thou wert no mocker of their laws!

But when thou fellest, as they fall,
Into the sullen depths below,
And darkness settled over all
That earth's dull eyes were wont to
know—
And looking through the empty air,
Men saw that thou had'st left no trace
Of what thou wert when dwelling there,
They marked no longer that lost place!

Sleep! I will watch beside thee, while
Mine eye may meet the moonbeam's smile
Sleep! I am near thee—till no more
Mine ear may catch the ocean's roar.
Then, though my grave be not with thine,
It will no hour of sorrow be
When that deep grief no more is mine—
To live a life unshared by thee!

THE FISHERMAN.

(Lines for Music.)

OH! a lonely life the fisherman leads,
By the shores of the mighty ocean,
His music the sigh of its broken reeds,
Or the moan of its ceaseless motion.

He watches at eve the sun's red globe
Sink down in the glowing water,
Till the earth is veiled in the dusky robe
That the twilight hours have brought her!

Then he steers o'er the sea his fearless
boat,
Though the shades of night are falling,
And he hears the sea-fowl's evening note
From the rock to the island calling.

OH! a lonely life the fisherman leads,
By the shores of the mighty ocean,
His music the sigh of its broken reeds,
Or the moan of its ceaseless motion.

Yet the Finland hunter dwells afar
In the North, without repining,
And blesses the light of each brilliant star,
On his frozen pathway shining!

The chase of the deer, or the grisly bear,
The long dark days beguiling,
Is dearer to him than a clime more fair,
Or a sun from a blue sky smiling.

And the Arab, who lives a life so free,
Where the desert sun is glowing,
Is happier there than he e'er could be,
Where our own cool winds are blowing.

So well may the fisherman love his cot,
Where the fire is brightly burning,
As he merrily seeks the cheery spot,
From his evening work returning.

Yet a lonely life the fisherman leads,
By the shores of the mighty ocean,
His music the sigh of its broken reeds,
Or the moan of its ceaseless motion.

ENGLAND'S DAUGHTER.

FRETTING the waves of the Atlantic sea,
Full many a weary day thy barque must
be;
But one fond heart is with thee on the
water—
Forget her not! thy country's lonely
daughter!

Remember! when thy head
Thou layest on thy pillow,
When long the sunset's red
Hath faded on the billow,
That where thy footsteps used,
Hour after hour to stray,
And where thy heart hath mused,
At closing of the day,
One mournfully may stand,
Watching each setting star
That seeks a southern land—
Weeping for those afar!

Fretting the waves of the Atlantic sea,
Full many a weary day thy barque must
be;
But one fond heart is with thee on the
water—
Forget her not! thy country's lonely
daughter!

The glorious Southern eye,
Whose warmth is like the sky
That lights a southern spot—
Have England's daughters not!
Their eyes are blue, and thou
With darker ones may meet,
With broader, nobler brow,
With tones more rich and sweet.
But never can there be
A heart more fond and true,
Than that which beats for thee
Beyond the waters blue!

Fretting the waves of the Atlantic sea,
Full many a weary month thy barque
must be;
But one fond heart is with thee on the
water—
Forget her not! thy country's lonely
daughter!

THE FISHERMAN'S BRIDE.

THE harvest moon is on the wane,
The mist lies on the lea, love,
When will the hours return again
That brings thee back to me, love?

The deer seek shelter in the glen,
The moorhen in the sedgy lake,
The wildfowl haunt the marshy fen,
The hare is hiding in the brake.
October flowers are fading fast,
The cold winds strip the yellow trees,
For autumn days are nearly passed—
Ah—never were they sad as these!
The skies but now of richest blue—
Are changing to the winter's hue—
And midnight fogs will render vain
The lamp I burn for thee, love.
When will the hours return again
That bring thee back to me, love?

'Tis sad, *alone*, as evening wears,
To hear the waves dash on the shore,
Or watch, through hot and blinding tears,
The setting sunlight catch the oar!
Or listen, as the hours drag on,
The tolling of some distant bell
Across the waves, whose mellowed tone
Swell sadly as the waters swell.
'Tis sad to mark, day after day,
Without thy presence pass away—
Then, after all its hours of pain,
The close of night to see, love.

When will the hours return again
That bring thee home to me, love?

O! winter nights are long and dark,
Through which my vigil oft I keep,
To catch the first glimpse of thy barque,
When it shall bound across the deep!
Too oft the petrel's warning note,
The sea-gull, with yet wilder scream,
Foreboding evil to thy boat,
Awake me from some mournful dream.
Alas! mine is a troubled sleep,
And yet to waken is to weep,
Or listen to the stormy rain
That splashes on the sea, love.
When will the hours return again
That bring thee back to me, love?

MURMURS BY THE "SAD SEA WAVES."

MURMUR I.

WHEN sunset glitters o'er the moaning
waves,
Oft by the shore, in sad and sober
moods
I muse, upon the thousand mournful
graves,
Where Hope lies dead, and Love in
silence broods.

Silent I sit upon the lonely beach,
To hear the ocean sobbing on the shore.
O love! O joy! ye are beyond my reach—
Love is a dream—Ambition cheers no
more.

O! for an hour when the chill heart might
rise
Above the drear thoughts of this common
earth—

In vain—in vain! sad Echo still replies,
Youth hath passed on—Love hath no
second birth.

O! for an hour when the young feet were
swift

To tread the flower-bright plain—to
climb the hill;
Ah, Pity! let thy sad-hued curtain lift,
And eyes look bright and hearts beat
fondly still.

Too late! despairing word—will nothing
raise

The heavy pall that low and lower falls,
Bring back the glowing hopes of youth's
bright days,
Dispel the gloom that more and more
appals?

Earth is forsaken—save in some fond
dream

Youth comes with bounding step and
song of joy—

Fancies that some dark hours will still
redeem—

Hours of delight no Day-fiend can
destroy!

Under the waters of the boundless sea
Gems for an unborn age may brightly
shine,

Gems that *our* eyes will vainly seek to
see—

Not for *thy* vision, brother! nor for mine.

Life! thou art dreary in some moods of
mind,

Full of pale thoughts of hopelessness
and grief,

Thy silver rusts, thy gold is unrefined,
Age brings no wisdom—care hath no
relief.

The sea is silent and the sun hath set—
There is no answering brightness from
the sky;

The dying breezes sigh—*Youth will forget*,
As falls the leaf, so Love and Hope
must die.

MURMUR II.

O LIFE! O love! if aught should chance
to sever

The links that bind our souls with ties
so sweet,

Then would my fond heart cease to beat,
for ever—

Cold as this granite whereon rest my feet.

O life! O love! if one should e'er depart,
Leaving the other by the moaning sea,
Death would reign, only, o'er the lonely
heart,

The bond that binds us is—Eternity.

O life! O love! together we have trod
 The paths of life, from earliest youthful
 years,
 For evermore companions, sent by God,
 Joy hath not severed us—nor yet shall
 tears!

O life! O love! whate'er shall yet betide
 In this conflicting life we lead below,
 Still ever keep ye faithful, side by side,
 Through morning tempests to the sun-
 set's glow!

O life! O love! together to the last!
 Till the fair goal of Life in Heaven we
 reach—
 Neither appalled by fury of the blast,
 Nor by cruel rocks that strew the stony
 beach.

MURMUR III.

"NO MORE—NO MORE!"

AGAIN she lingers by the darkening main,
 Recalling sadly days of past delight—
 Her eyes are wandering o'er the seas in
 vain,
 No sail, no vessel glads her weary sight.

"No more—no more!" these words ring
 in her ears—

"Thy sighs are useless—stay those futile
 tears."

No more, no more—yet Hope will still
 believe,
 In liege with Youth—with Pleasure—to
 deceive!

"No more!"—oh! dreary words! and
 scarcely Age

Can read, with eyes undimmed, Life's fatal
 page.

A ship goes forth—to meet its lonely
 fate—

No more she sees—the hour grows dark
 and late.

A skilful mariner may guide the helm,
 Yet winds will rise, and billows over-
 whelm!

No more, no more! fair Spring can ne'er
 return,
 Nor the tired heart with love and pleasure
 burn.

The green blades of the grass are dry and
 brown—
 The pearly blossoms fade—the fruit falls
 down,
 Dies ripened in the turf below our feet—
 Ah! truth is bitter, only dreams are sweet!

No more, no more! it is the mermaid's
 song—

Gaily the light wave bears its note along,
 Until they rest in silence on the main—
 Hope dies despairing—youth and love are
 vain.

BY THE WHITE CLIFFS.

O! LITTLE hands and little feet!
 I see them through the blinding tears—
 O! little voices—soft and sweet,
 I hear them through the roll of years.
 The tiny white and trembling hands,
 That tell of sickness and of pain—
 Filled with the treasures of the sands,
 How memory brings them back again!

I see them wandering, side by side—
 Those treasured loves of early days—
 They come again at eventide,
 With all their pretty childish ways—
 And sweet it is awhile to dwell
 Apart from life's too busy hum,
 Wrapt in the sad and tender spell
 Of sorrows past—of joys to come.

Thou pine-girt place—how calm thou art!
 The moon that shimmers through thy
 trees

Seems of thy woods a very part,
 When parted by the wild sea breeze.
 Not even the boatman's carol rude
 Thy sleeping echoes bear along—
 Thou art the very solitude
 For lovers' sighs and poet's song.

White cliffs that breast the ocean wave,
 Fringed with dark shades of birch and
 pine—

Bright stars that light the pirates' cave,
 And through their gloomy branches
 shine—

Flag of the yacht, or idler's sail,
 That gently flaps the dying gale—
 Across the darkness ye return,
 Like visions—mournful but not stern!

Away! for busy life is near,
 Whose constant murmur thrills mine ear;
 It is the world—the world of strife—
 It is the voice of eager life.
 Give not to grief, to vain regret,
 The moments that are granted yet;
 There still is work that may be done,
 There still are victories to be won!

Bournemouth,

September, 1880.

A FEW SONGS OF LIGHTER HOURS.

THE SPITEFUL BEE.

(A Supposed Fable of Gay's.)

A BEE one day, in bitter mood,
 Resolved to fight the whole bee brood!
 No sooner said than done, she flew
 At once amidst the busy crew.
 And in a moment stung them all,
 The Queen, the drone—the big, the
 small,
 And, happy, as she cleans her wings,
 Of Troy and "joys of war" she sings.
 Then proudly, later in the day,
 "Saul might his boasted thousands
 slay,
 But I with millions line the floor,
 Piled up in heaps that block the
 door!"

"Where is the She so brave as I?
 A She, who half so fiercely stings
 The weak, the old that cannot fly,
 The rash, or 'feeble, silly' things!
 Lay up their food for rainy days!
 I hate such hypocritic ways!
 'Tis greed, wise mankind thinks with me,
 And scorns, at heart, the busy bee.
He brightens the sad ways of life,
 But *I* would have things full of strife,
 I love to hear the sharp reproaches,
 The cries! at bites of vile cockroaches.
 Ye tears! I love to see ye flow—
 Joy I detest—I feed on woe.
 So merrily around I fly,
 To see the feeble droop and die!"

October, 1880.

THE WAY WE LIVE NOW.

With Apologies to Mr. Trollope.

(Supposed to be contributed by one Hodges, Hert-
fordshire boörn!)

"A duke will ride in a second-class carriage, and
 a duchess come down to breakfast in a linsey
 gown."—*Young Mrs. Jardine.*

"I HITS Stodges maäny hard blows,
 For un desarnes um, that I knows—
 But, if Stodges hits back agin,
 I sez, sez I, 'tis a shaäme and a zin!
 For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut, you
 know,
 And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo!

"For who bees Stodges?—a *hignorant* vool,
 He doänt goo to charch and he doänt goo
 to school,
 He aint got no larning, nor courage nuther,
 And t' missus's more *hignorant* nor thet' other!
 For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut, you
 know,
 And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo!

"For Stodges—he b'longs t' the good old
 times,
 When folly and *hignorance* wurnt no crimes—
 He doänt write no letters and t' books
 never reads,
 But he drives t' oold plough and he zoes
 t' tare zeeds.
 For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut, you
 know,
 And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo.

"The hoäme that he's gotten he caänt
 maintain,
 And his wifen's rare zilly, voolish and vain;
 He caänt e'en gie un a round good blow—
She thinks it rare clevvur nothing to know,
 For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut, you
 know,
 And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo!

"And his chillun wull grow up all the zaäme,
 Folly and zilliness *their* pooty gaäme—
 What not to dew, mon, and what not to zay,
 'Tis all that they duz, mon, the whole, live
 day!
 For that Missus Raikes, *she* sez ut, you
 know,
 And it mun be true, mon, if *she* sez zo!

“Noa! they dunno what in t’ warld to doo—
Nar they dunno where in t’warld to goo—
And they zits or they strools, droo th’ vields
all day,

Sometoimes o’ this un—then that un way!
For that Missus Raikes, *she sez ut, you know,*

And it mun be true, mon, if *she sez zo!*

“When *they’ve* gotten money, oh! doänt
they dress vine?

Nuthin’ to remind un o’ pigsties and swine—
And in grand old halls goo merrily around,
All to pianny or to viddles’ merry zound.

For that Missus Raikes, *she sez ut, you know,*

And it mun be true, mon, if *she sez zo.*

“And doänt they live also on nice food
nuther?

Venison and jellies — one a patch on
t’other—

There’s nuthin’ too vine for their stomachs
I’m thinking,

And nuthin’ too prime for their throats for
drinking.

For that Missus Raikes, *she sez ut, you know,*

And it mun be true, mon, if *she sez zo.*

“And when un’s in town, too, ’tis rare good
vun

To loäke at the shops and the things in un,
And buy the vine dresses, mon, that you zees
there,

’Tis better, least, than going, mon, *you knows*
where!

For that Missus Raikes, *she sez ut, you know,*

And it mun be true, mon, if *she sez zo.*

“And even in travellun’, if the zeats be
haärd,

There’s the laäst penny nooz, or the laäst
c’rect caärd—

And if um’s squeezeg’d close, why, it doänt
much matter,

For um all wears ‘linsey,’ and it caänt get
flatter!

For that Missus Raikes, *she sez ut, you know,*

And it mun be true, mon, if *she sez zo.*

“For this is what duchesses wear, I’m told,
So it caän’t hurt in crushing, if I may maäke
bold;

And they ought’n much t’care, for it ain’t
much cost,
And it doän’t much show, when it’s crumpled
and crossed.

For that Missus Raikes, *she sez ut, you know,*

And it mun be true, mon, if *she sez zo!*

“Since our Missus’ grey dresses are all made
t’ hum,

There ain’t no bills vor at Christmas to
cum;

There woän’t be no ribbons nor fal-lals to
pay vor,

And there woän’t be no hoops, hurrah! to
make way vor,

For that Missus Raikes *she sez ut, you know,*

Zo it mun be true, mon, if *she sez zo!*

“’Tis a werry good töime for the pigs and the
asses,

’Tis a rare good töime for the crowds and the
masses,

With not no “linsey gowns,” but all velvet
and silk uns,

Oh! a rare good töime for the real Charley
Dylke uns!

For that Missus Raikes, *she sez it, you know,*

And it mun be true, mon, if *she sez zo!*

“For zum they be fat uns and zum they be
thin,

And zum they sticks out and zum they caves
in;

Zum looks loike our baäcon and zum poplar
trees,

And they doänt care for purtyness, that I
zees!

For that Missus Raikes, *she sez ut, you know,*

And it mun be true, mon, if *she sez zo!*

“Duz *hurn* ride in zecond class, or third
class mebbe,

And thinks that’s the way she proves she’s a
ledde—

And calls for a barrer rhat drives un on
ends,

When she goos down to —sheer to zee
t’oold friends!

For that Missus Raikes, *she sez ut, you know,*

And it mun be true, mon, if *she sez zo!*

"Dew they *arl* go bumping in they second
 classes—
 These vine young loärds and their vine young
 lasses?
 Duz they wear no zatin and other vine dodges?
 Then — *if that be their vineness—why—I'd*
rayther be Hodges!"

MOAN OF THE DISCONTENTED.

MIDNIGHT'S veil o'er earth is spreading,
 All is wrapt in gloom and shade,
 Faint the light the moon is shedding,
 Cold the wind in wood and glade.
 But than midnight darker still,
 The shadow on my spirit cast—
 More biting than the north wind's chill,
 Is 'disappointment's withering blast.

O trifer! when thy step is bounding
 O'er some grave's deserted flowers,
 Or, rather, when thy harp is sounding
 Notes of woe in sorrow's hours—
 Think of him whose heart is broken,
 Dweller in a living tomb,
 O'er whom the words of doom are spoken,
 Hopes destroying ere they bloom!

Every one that I have cherished
 From my dreary heart is banished,
 All within of joy hath perished,
 All without of light hath vanished!
 Feelings wounded—feelings blighted,
 Never from some trouble free,
 'Mid the gloom of woe benighted
 What on earth is left for me!

O! it was Youth's fairy finger
 Wove the fatal spells that bound me,
 He alone could bid them linger,
 Evermore in brightness round me.
 But the words of Fate were spoken,
 All of joy I deemed my own,
 Faded—wasted, or was broken—
 Happiness for ever flown!

Chide me not—if, broken-hearted,
 Scared by Sorrow's heavy blow,
 Scenes of joy—of hopes departed,
 Haunt me still where'er I go!

O—O—O—O—.

* * * * *

[Note.—He was discontented even with his own
 complaint by this time, and so broke off abruptly.]

A YOUNG GIRL AMONG THE CHESTNUT TREES.

[This was, in fact, but one tree, of which twin
 stems, when about a foot from the ground, divided
 into four magnificent ones, each a tree in itself. It
 grew in the grounds adjoining the old manor-house
 of Sandon Bury. (Plate VI.) And a wooden house
 was built in the tree.]

I DO remember well a wooden house,
 Built 'mid the four stems of twin chest-
 nut trees,
 A mansion fit for the domestic mouse,
 But scarcely made for giants, if you
 please!

There would I sit and ponder, if this
 world
 Would prove as happy as I deemed it
 then—
 While dew fell softly on the green leaves
 curled,
 And rabbits sported in the moonlit glen.

There would I wonder if my love would
 come
 To fetch me, from some lovely, sunlit
 land,
 And bear me, smiling, to some happy
 home,
 Heart pressed to heart and fond hand
 clasping hand.

No human clatter there disturbed my rest,
 Only the titmouse, tapping on the
 bark,
 Only the wood-dove, cooing on its nest—
 Only the starlight, gleaming through the
 dark!

One foot on topmost bough and one
 below—
 Like a descent from Paradise to
 Hades—
 A nice descent for little boys we know,
 But scarce so nice for timid girls or
 ladies!

But ah! how sweet it was to rock about,
 And hear the pattering of the summer
 rain,
 The wild birds singing and the cowherd's
 shout,
 And know all search for me would be in
 vain!

To hide in covert, like the timid roe,
Nor stir abroad until the red sunset,
These are the pleasures of long, long ago,
Remembered still with something of—
regret!

IMPROMPTU LINES ON "MY UNCLE."

I HAD an uncle in former days,
A gentleman known for eccentric ways;
A grey old banker, and one, it seems,
With all the money that "banking"
means.
But he lived in an unpretending street,
In a shabby house, for extremes *will*
meet,
With a shabby carriage, and servants as
bad,
All called him *stingy*, but no one *mad*!

I dined with him once, and I thought to
eat
A dinner of soup, of fish, and meat,
Some pudding to follow; perhaps, beside,
Some fruit from a garden that seemed his
pride,
So full of cherries and green, young peas!
Alas for me! we had none of these.
But you'll not believe it, you hardly can,
Unless you had known the sort of man—
The miserly rich! His dinner was not
Of fish, flesh, or fowl; not even hot,
But only a joint of fat, salt pig—
'Twas a *cheek*, I think, it was rather big
For only two; as for pudding or spice,
Or custard—ah me! there was nothing so
nice!

"Mine uncle" quitted the world one day,
One winter's morn, in the oddest way.
His men were cleaning a muddy pond,
Once used for fish, in the field beyond;
And the work was hard, or the men were
idle,
And he, who could never his temper bridle,
At once declared, with an angry shout,
They didn't know what they were about,
And *he* would show them the way to do
it;

And so he did, but he lived to rue it,
Or rather *died*—from the lesson taught,
So fatal the chill that the teacher caught!

He left me money—not much—in his will,
I thanked him then, and I thank him
still!

I knew that money had oft its abuse,
So I put out mine to a right good use,
That brought me pleasure and profit as
well,
But that's a secret I need not tell!

THE SPURIOUS CRITICS.

(A Second Supposed Fable of Gay's.)

GOOD Sirs, when next you vent your spite
See your sarcasm is more bright!
Go home, and polish up your wit,
It needs some polish, all admit.
Your words have not the accents even
Of truth, that first, pure gift of Heaven.
You spoil even what you think you're
praising,
Sure "Oireland" boasted your "upraising,"
Or backwoods in the "Coloneese"
But scarce old England, if you please!
We scorn the meagreness, the air
Of want of candour we see there,
Perchance ye bless some other shore,
And England boasts your race no more

O critics of a day gone by,
Of searching wit, of fearless eye,
Ghosts of Macaulay, Croker, Hume,
To wear your cloak some still assume,
But are as like the ancient clan
As Apes, who dare assume the Man!
'Tis but a passing phase, we trust,
Cowards there may be—will be—*must*!
Bright are the critic-rays, but rare,
And pass like meteors through the air.
And those that oft assume the place
Are poor pretenders in the race,
Are such a "mockery of the letter"
The sooner they are gone the better.
Not from a sculptor's hand are they,
Or formed of but his coarser clay.
'Tis true that when their rays are fine,
Few meteors more admired can shine,
But when but feeble beams they cast,
Sickly, pretentious of the past,
They are but shadows, at the best,
They are a mockery and a pest.

O critics of a nobler school,
Whose words could fire, whose pens could
rule,

Whose ink was bright, whose strokes were keen,
Where have your wandering footsteps been!
In other histories are ye named,
Have other lands your service claimed?
"Come back to Erin" was a cry
We all remember, years gone by—
Come back to *Englund*, critics dear,
Be sure a home awaits you here!
Where honest hands and glances sweet
Will ever honest service greet,
And welcome back to vacant places,
One of the "Literary Graces"—
The critics—that we knew of yore,
Bold, witty, fearless, brave—once more!

October, 1880.

HAPPY THOUGHTS;

OR, THE EXCUSES OF THE SCANDAL-
MONGER.

"I BELIEVE what they have told me," said
a caterpillar once,
And some few who heard the saying
thought the insect was a dunce.
But there's many like that caterpillar, cer-
tainly I fear,
Who believe whatever's told them—credit
everything they hear.

"O! it *must* be true"—they say, with
gaping mouth and starting eyes,
"I am sure that 'So-and-So' would never
tell me such bare lies—
I often thought it might be, for I always
saw about her
A *something* I can *hardly* say, that could
but make one doubt her.

"O yes! it must be true, I'm sure, for I
remember now
We met her once at Smithson's, when she
scarce returned my bow—
She always was so stuck up, and seemed
scarce to care to know us.
*But truly she shall pay for the contempt
she seemed to show us.*

"O yes! she gave herself such airs, her
family was old,
And 'came before' the Conqueror, at least
so we were told—

And never had their money from a busi-
ness or a trade,
As if it mattered, so we got it, *how* the
tin was made!

"O yes! she was so stuck up—said *good
breeding* was the thing,
And did not care for wealth, or what proud
grandeur it might bring,
She did not care for 'Sunday dress,' for
which we snubbed her often,
And nothing her dislike to our 'gentility'
could soften.

"For she came of a good old stock—she
loved it more than money,
And more than dress or finery, which
seemed to us so funny—
Was prouder of her family than even we
of show,
And if there is a stupid thing that is the
thing—I know!

"O! it is ridiculous—that gentle, high-
bred air,
'Tis everything what *we* are—nothing what
our fathers were—
But we who make the money can afford
to treat with scorn
The airs of all *such* people—the well-bred
and the well-born!"

October, 1880.

MORE HAPPY THOUGHTS.

OLD ladies like their scandal and old ladies
like their tea,
But which is it they love the best, I think
I hear you say—
Oh, scandal by a hundred times! or so it
seems to me,
For that they can have served to them at
all times in the day!

Oh, scandal is delightful! for it makes the
hours pass by
Without a break upon the way, so rapidly
they fly;
It soothes and comforts one so much,
wherever one may be,
To think our friends so foolish, that so
much more wise are we!

Oh, scandal is delightful! the most tasty of
all food—
For it makes one feel so comfortable, O!
so wise and good—
For *we* don't do as others do—are not such
fools as they,
And can we say a wiser thing, or one
more pleasant, pray?

Yes! tea comes in the morning, or the
evening of the day,
But scandal ever fills the mighty goblet
on the tray—
Our tea we swallow down but in small
cupfuls at a time,
But scandal is served up to us in bumpers,
when it's prime!

November, 1880.

PADDY'S INVITATION.

(Impromptu lines on suddenly hearing
that Mr. ——— was going on a visit
to Ireland.)

OH! Johnny, brave Johnny, ould England's
own Johnny,
Come to the land that is peaty and bonny;
Come to the scenes that yer thoughts most
deloight in,
Your heart all for pace and your hand fit
for foightin'.
O! come o'er the wathers to Erin's green
isle,
To a sodger's warm welcome, a purty
girl's smile!

Give up the Sassenach's wicked ould
schule,
We'll tatche you, sorr, how to conquer
or rule;
We'll tatche you better nor they would
have taught *us*,
We'll buy your favour as they would have
bought *us*.
O! come o'er the wathers to Erin's green
isle,
To a sodger's warm welcome, a purty
girl's smile!

We'll tatche you Wisdom, Sobriety, Pace;
Till all the warrs in this wild woorld shall
sace;

Till England's ould sheep wid our lion
lies down,
And Paddy is crowned wid a conqueror's
crown!
O! come o'er the wathers to Erin's green
isle,
To a sodger's warm welcome, a purty
girl's smile!

Och! come o'er the wathers, thin, Johnny,
me boy,
We'll welcome ye gladly, *we'll* meet ye
wid joy;
We'll beat thim ould Southrons—O! *we'll*
show ye how—
And if ye're no sodger *we'll* tatche it ye,
now!
So come o'er the wathers to Erin's green
isle,
To a sodger's warm welcome, a purty
girl's smile!
1879.

FRAGMENTS OF AN OLD LEGEND.

INTRODUCTION.

FAR from the glowing clime of Italy,
Placed in the colder regions of the West,
There is an isle, in the Atlantic Sea—
The eagle builds upon its mountain crest—
The wild fowls breed upon its marshy
moor—
Its reedy plains, that knew not life before.
Yet hath it, mixed with these, bright,
peaceful dells—
Woods for the birds and bees and flower-
bells,
Too beautiful to paint when summer's
smile
Gilds with its gladdening beam that
western isle!

Sweet Innisfallen! in thy ruder clime,
Although the colours of thy changeful sky,
Even in the brightest hours of summer-
time
Know not, or rarely, Italy's deep dye—
Though thou hast not the rich, the gor-
geous flowers
That scent the south wind in Italia's
bowers,
Nor the sweet melody that floats o'er all
In her voluptuous clime, at evenfall—

Yet, poetry is in the echoing roar
Of thy wild waves, known to no other
shore.

Even in this distant age a spell is flung
O'er the weird plains where OSSIAN-lays
were sung!

And on the marshy waste and heathy hill,
The poet's spirit seems to linger still,
To call up phantoms in the midnight
storms—

That shroud, in driving mist, their ghastly
forms—

Pale shadows of the long-forgotten slain,
Haunting the rude mounds of some battle-
plain,

That come, when evening's light is grow-
ing pale,

To pour o'er the unhonoured dead, their
wail.

CANTO I.

LONG since—washed by old ocean's tides—
Bounded by rocks on other sides,
And visited by summer rains,
Stretched one of those wild battle-plains
O'er whose bleak wastes a spell is cast,
By weird old legends of the past!

The tangled briar-bush overran
The mouldering bones of fallen man—
And stones and rocks were roughly piled
In cairns o'ergrown with mosses green,
Yet, when the sunlight o'er it smiled,
Though rude, it was no dreary scene!
The wildfowl, nestling half concealed
By rushes—grass, and brushwood low,
Came out to feel the sun's warm glow,
The wilder sea-birds o'er them wheeled—
The petrel—with its wings of white,
That glanced and quivered in the light;
And each sweet blossom that had found
A shelter on the marshy ground,
Lifted to heaven its slender head,
As if to bless the light it shed!

Built firmly on a craggy rock,
The centre of that wide extent,
Stood the old tower of Ballynock,
As though it were some monument
Raised by the spectres of the slain,
To guard each now neglected mound;
For, monarch of that lonely plain,
High o'er the swampy flat it frowned—
And from its height might be descried
The towers of Hugh O'Neil, that stood,

In all their old ancestral pride,
On noble rock—mid shaggy wood.
While opposite, far in the west,
There was the sweetest village nest,
Beyond which hills stretched far away,
Pine-girt or heathy, green or grey,
Till, fading from the gazer's eye,
Their outline mingled with the sky.

It was o'erlooking this wild scene,
At close of one of those bright days
When all looks peaceful, calm and green—
A maiden sat, whose pensive gaze,
From Ballynock's old casement, grey
With time, had watched the sunset pass,
Until the tints of evening lay
On mossy stone and bending grass.
A smile was lighting her blue eyes
And parted lips, that otherwise
Seemed, like those deep orbs, to express
Even in that face, so soft and fair,
That look of painful earnestness,
That tells the tale of youthful care!

An orphan at an early age,
Hers were not childhood's happy years;
And Morna soon had stained the page
Of life with many bitter tears.
Graceful in form as fair in face,
Though daughter of no noble race,
There was that charm in her bright eyes,
Tearful and blue as her own skies—
That even made, by Morna's side,
High-born O'Neil forget his pride!
He would have given his haughty name
Fair Morna's snowy hand to claim!
And Hugh was young—of handsome mien,
With eyes that, beautiful and keen,
Revealed no lukewarm soul within—
Yet Morna's hand was hard to win—
Her heart had long been given to one
Who only by his love had won!
For his estates were barren plains,
That bounded Hugh O'Neil's domains—
His home was on a lonely rock—
His castle halls—rude Ballynock!

But Morna's soul was full of love
For all of beautiful on earth;
The changeful sky that bent above—
The flowers that owed to it their birth.
And Morna, from a very child,
Had loved to hear the legends wild
Of Ballynock's rude plains—to tread
Upon the soil where heroes bled!

She learned to know each mossy stone,
Each broken rock with grass o'ergrown,
Each lakelet, where the wildfowl bred,
And wheeled with screams, above her head—

To hear the moaning of the waves,
Washing the fabled Sea-Kings' caves;
And, wandering by the wild seashore
With Edgar, Morna asked no more!
Until, on one bright summer day,
A year had rolled its course away,
And war came—and the youthful chief
With Hugh O'Neil to battle went,
And Morna's hours in lonely grief,
And prayers for his return were spent.
Alas! he came not back again,
She watched and wept for him in vain;
O'Neil returned alone, to tell
How in the battle Edgar fell.

Two years had passed since them, and
though

Time softens e'en the keenest woe,
Yet Morna's was a loving heart,
And often still the tears would start
When some sweet sound—some sunny eve
Recalled the lost and loved to mind;
Although not idly did she grieve,
But gentle, pensive, and resigned.
She shrank from melody and mirth,
And in the humbler homes of earth
Felt happy, when her hand could ease
The pangs of suffering and disease.
And other causes brought the smile
To Morna's careworn cheek awhile—
Though of the one beloved bereft,
Morna had still a brother left,
To watch for whose return she sat
And looked out from her casement grey,
Though hooting owl and flitting bat
Reminded her of parting day.

Dermid had been a fearless boy,
And legends of the wildest kind
Would make his young brow glow with
joy,
And echo in his daring mind.
His eye would flash with generous fire,
To hear of deeds of noble worth
He had besides, a wild desire
To visit stranger scenes of earth—
With free and joyous eyes to gaze
On foreign woods, and rocks, and bays!

But o'er that bold heart was, withal,
That glow of warm, romantic feeling,
That loves to watch, at evenfall,
The sober shades of autumn, stealing
O'er quiet plain and beech-wood dingle,
The star of evening, wan and single,
Steal out through sunset's lurid gold,
And sadly light the plain and wold.
The moon that shone through broken
clouds,
The fogs of even, as they drove
Like phantoms, in their ghastly shrouds,
O'er the dark vales would Dermid love!
And lingering like some pensive lover,
Upon the sands of the seashore,
He watched the sea-birds o'er him hover,
Or listened to the surges' roar.
Yet, checking the strong wish to be,
Where the green waves of that fierce sea
Upon some stranger shore might curl,
He lingered still by Morna's side,
And ne'er had quitted that fair girl,
Till, happy as young Edgar's bride
He bade her farewell in her home—
And went through newer scenes to roam.

* * * * *

The night came on—one brilliant star
Gleamed on the ancient field of war,
The mountain mists arose—but ere
The moonbeams quivered o'er the mere,
The watched-for came! and as she heard
The accent kind—the first fond word
That she had heard from him for years,
Fair Morna's dark eyes filled with tears.

"And will you dwell for ever here
And never leave me, Dermid, dear—
And shall we watch again together
The foaming sea in stormy weather—
And gather sea-shells or field flowers,
As we have done in earlier hours?"

"Dear Morna, yes! I have returned
From those wild scenes for which I
yearned—
My heart is weary and oppressed,
I long for peace, dear, and for rest.
I wearied of the gorgeous dyes
Of foreign scenes—of foreign skies;
There's rest in this wild solitude,
Where sounds are not, or sweet, or rude—
Where e'en the sad forget to sigh,
'Tis here that I would live—and die!"

† A passage is here lost—evidently referring to Dermid's return.

Ere from his native land he roved
 Dermid by many chiefs was loved,
 For courteous manners—kindly heart—
 And so from many a distant part
 They came, to welcome back once more,
 The wanderer to his own loved shore.
 Even he, the haughty Hugh O'Neil,
 Judged best his hatred to conceal,
 Though Dermid had been Edgar's friend—
 And this, he deemed, had chiefly led
 Fair Morna that young chief to wed.
 'Twas hard that scornful heart to bend,
 'Twas harder even to disguise
 The hatred gleaming in his eyes!
 But Morna still was loved, although
 Her cheek had lost its first fresh glow,
 And now was somewhat lined and faded,
 How much of beauty still was there,
 And by their pensive lashes shaded
 How lovely still her dark eyes were!
 And she grew lovelier as the smile
 That suited her fair face so well,
 Returned again, to throw awhile
 O'er all, its loving, tender spell.
 Alas! it was a transient light,
 A sunbeam quenched in stormy night!
 But little then poor Morna knew
 The heavy cloud of grief, that threw
 Such shadows o'er her life's young scene,
 With only transient light between,
 Ere long, on her devoted path,
 Would pour its last and darkest wrath!

Two miles from Ballynock, and in
 O'Neil's dominions was a cave,
 And those who passed it heard the din,
 And echo of the hidden wave.
 Though near upon the water's verge,
 The constant breaking of the surge
 Defended all approaches, save
 From those that dared that surge to brave.
 Here sometimes met a reckless crew,
 From what wild shore they came none
 knew!

They met by night and often laid
 Their lawless hands upon the flocks
 Of some poor villagers, that strayed,
 At nightfall, o'er the neighbouring rocks.
 And wild the revelry—'twas said,
 Within that cave was sometimes heard—
 The villages, whose very bread
 Depended each upon his herd
 Of goats, complained to Hugh O'Neil—
 Who promised, with apparent zeal,
 To seize or to disperse the foe.
 But strange to say none seemed to know

When danger threatened their domain—
 The foe still managed to elude
 Their search, yet still returned again
 From some unheard-of solitude!
 This led the villagers to say
 Strange things of Hugh O'Neil himself—
 Why lived he in a style so gay?
 Whence came his grandeur and his wealth?
 Though high the race from whence he
 came,
 He owed them little but the name!

But Dermid, ever bold of hand,
 Resolved to seize the robber band,
 Ere he for many months had been
 Inhabitant of this wild scene.
 He manned his boats one stormy night,
 Just as the pale and crescent moon
 Withdrew from heaven her pallid light—
 But Dermid's followers came too soon
 To storm the lion in his lair—
 Three only of the band were there.
 These ruffians soon they safely bound,
 But for their comrades watched in vain—
 'Tis certain they were never found
 Within that cavern-haunt again.
 What chance detained them they heard
 not—

'Twas doubtless in some safer spot
 An oath of fierce revenge they swore,
 Much for their comrades' fate, but more
 For the rich booty they had lost—
 The robes of silk—the gems of cost,
 Which Dermid's band had dared to
 seize—
 Wrongs vengeance only could appease!

It had been one of those hot days
 When earth seems withered, by the rays
 Of sunlight, and the flowers most sweet
 Grow scentless in the burning heat.
 The sky, till noontide, had been clear,
 But, as the evening hours drew near,
 Black, lowering clouds began to meet—
 Like warriors gathering, seemed to greet—
 Behind the mountains of the west,
 Just ere the sun had sunk to rest,
 And from behind the broken pile
 Of mists, gave out his parting smile;
 Till craggy stone and rock and steep
 That bordered here the moaning deep
 Blushed gently, and then fiery red—
 And o'er the waves its glory shed—
 Till, slowly, with one parting look,
 It faded from the dazzled eye—

Leaving the scenes that it forsook,
The lightning, radiance to supply!
Now showing forms of rugged rocks—
Defining their majestic blocks—
Then passing—glancing down below,
It bathed the plains in softer glow.
Lastly, it quivered o'er the wave,
Where grey-stone rock and marble reef,
Gleamed in the vivid light it gave,
So beautiful and yet so brief!

The evening had been strangely warm,
Long after that red sun had set—
And watching the slow-gathering storm,
Dermid and Morna lingered yet.
Both silently, as if it brought
Some train of melancholy thought
To mind—some scenes of former years—
And Morna's dark eyes filled with tears.

"Brother!" at last she softly said,
"Time these last years has sadly sped!
Though not upon my brow alone,
The veil of sorrow has been thrown!
I well remember when we parted—
'Twas near these wild rocks of the sea,
And thou wert merry and light-hearted
As though Life held no griefs for thee!
But where is that bright spirit now,
The roving thoughts that none could
tame?"

So altered is that daring brow
I scarcely know it for the same.
Nay, tell me not that illness traced
Those circles, ne'er to be effaced—
Some deeper grief thy heart oppressed,
To make it languish thus for rest,
I cannot look upon thy face,
Nor see each sad, indented trace,
That tells a tale of bitter strife,
Instead of warm and joyous life!
There was a time when o'er thy heart
Could come no shade of grief and woe
But I, dear Dermid, there had part—
O! would that it might still be so!"

"Dear sister, ask not that of me—
I could not even speak to thee
Of her that I have loved and lost,
And all the anguish that it cost.
Forget, dear, that my cheek is pale—
'Twould madden me to tell—that tale!"

"Forgive me, it was cruel to ask
Thy lips then, to perform such task."

And Morna's dark and wistful eyes
Turned sadly to the sombre skies.
A few stars glimmered in the east,
And, as the thunder-clouds unfurled,
Seemed struggling through their piles, at
least
To throw some light upon the world!
Then, as she gazed, a meteor's gleam
Like lightning, lit a distant chain
Of hills—a momentary gleam—
Then left all dim and chill again!
The eyrie stillness of the eve—
Those storm-clouds with their threatening
form,
Warned Morna to retire and leave
The dark earth to the coming storm!

CANTO II.

NIGHT closed o'er Ballynock's old castle
grey,
The fury of the storm had passed away—
Through sullen clouds the moon serenely
rode,
Gleaming one moment like a spectre
through
The grey stone casements of that stern
abode—
Then suddenly her ghastly light withdrew!
The muttering of the thunder, low and
hoarse,
Still marked the tempest's slow, receding
course.

Though past her usual hour of rest
Fair Morna's couch was still unpressed.
'Twas not to watch the lightning's flash
Grow paler, or to mark the sound
Of billows, as they strove to dash
In anger, o'er their rocky bounds.
She neither saw that grim midnight
Was gathering o'er her silent halls,
Nor that her lamp's expiring light
Was flickering o'er the tap'stried walls.
A sudden light that from afar
Gleamed through the darkness, like a
star
That startles at the gloomy sky,
Just then caught Morna's tearful eye,
Who paused to wonder what sad wight
Was wandering out that stormy night—
And then returned to her sad train
Of melancholy thought again.
How long she sat, she never knew—
Her lamp, low in the socket, threw

A ghastly light around, that came
 By starts from its expiring flame,
 When suddenly, distinct and clear,
 A fearful cry struck on her ear!
 Then came a pause—it seemed so long,
 So frightfully—so strangely still!
 The heart that first beat wild and strong
 Grew pulseless suddenly—and chill.
 Her brain seemed darkened and then
 reeled,
 Her blood felt icy and congealed—
 One answering shriek—and o'er her sight
 Had crept the shades of darkest night!

'Twas well that consciousness had
 ceased—
 Some hours of bitterness at least
 Was spared that gentle, tender heart.
 Meanwhile her household, with a start,
 Had gathered in the hall, to share
 Their master's danger—but they were
 Unarmed, unable to withstand
 The pirates' wild and reckless band.
 Yet came a struggle—fierce but short—
 Resistance but too dearly bought!

And woe befell all household gems!
 Though there were no proud diadems
 For queenly brows—no ingots rare—
 Or diamond stars for raven hair,
 No bands of gold to bind the tress,
 Or deck the brow, to which was lent
 Too much of nature's loveliness
 To need aught other ornament—
 Yet those she had, to her were worth
 Far more than richer spoils of earth—
 Her father's portrait—set in gold,
 Though only simply, plainly set—
 Her mother's crucifix—these told,
 To one who loved not to forget—
 Though environed by storm and strife—
 The sweetest lessons of her life.
 And there was more than one rich pearl,
 Her lover's hand had placed above
 Her snowy brow—when, yet a girl
 She blushed at the first gifts of love!
 These and some other gems, her care
 Had treasured in a chamber lone,
 The far, blue hills were seen from
 there,
 And Morna called that room her own.
 'Twas in the west wing of the hall,
 That looked out on a western sky,
 The sun lit up its tap'stried wall,
 Before it faded from the eye!

And gentle Morna loved to sit
 In summer evenings—watching it,
 With Memory's fond and tender look
 To mark the shades, as they declined—
 Where every little gem, or book,
 Recalled her lover to her mind.
 Here came the pirates—to whose eyes
 Seemed much of priceless booty there—
 And more than one rich, costly prize
 Soon glittered in their torches' glare.
 For Edgar, when he brought his bride
 His lonely home to bless and share
 Had decked it, with a lover's pride,
 With much both beautiful and rare.
 Vases of snowy marble, rich
 With carving, from their stands were taken,
 And yet more priceless ones, from which
 Some wild field flowers were rudely
 shaken,
 That Morna had, the day before,
 Found in some rich spot of the moor.
 Here paused they—for they feared from
 none
 Discovery, till their work was done.

Mixed with their torches' fiery flame,
 A ray of yellow moonlight broke
 The veil of threatening clouds, and came
 Through Gothic frames of ancient oak.
 It shone not thus, on other nights,
 On ruffian forms and glaring lights.
 That moon, so silvery and cold,
 Threw, then, the casement-shadows o'er
 The tap'stry's weird and heavy fold,
 Or on the inlaid, plaquered floor,
 Now, as if sickened, it withdrew
 Its pure and peaceful light once more,
 Behind a cloud of blackest hue,
 And night grew gloomy as before.
 But first, upon the waters dark
 It glanced, and lit the pirates' barque,
 Then seemed to strive, with trembling
 beam,
 Into a lonely room to gleam—
 As one, who there, in darkness lay
 In silence bled his life away!

Some time had passed—when, favoured
 by
 The murky shadows of the sky,
 From Ballynock's old postern gate
 Two figures stole, with quickening pace—
 They seemed to bear some precious
 weight,
 And fear discovery or chase!

So hurriedly their footsteps traced
The rugged pathways of the waste—
Till they had reached the smooth sea-
sand—

Far from the pirate vessel's stand.
There, in a little creek or bay,
A shallow boat at anchor lay—
This they unmoored, in trembling haste,
Their burden in it gently placed—
Sprang in and pushed it from the shore—
Then, while one swiftly plied the oar,
The other—who, by one long tress
Escaped in haste or carelessness
Beneath a shadowy hat and large,
Seemed of the gentler sex—unwound
A mantle, her mysterious charge
That wrapt securely—closely—round,
And damp as though with Death's cold
dew,

Disclosed young Dermid's brow to view!
Then, with a firm and skilful touch,
She bound the wounds, that now had ble!
So long, neglectedly and much—
A little more, and life had fled!
While a third figure that, till now,
Sat silent at the vessel's prow,
In mumbling tones, began to tell
Her beads, or breathe some weighty spell!

It needed all that watcher's care—
So little now of life was there,
To bring it to that brow again!
Her efforts long could only gain
Some faint and interrupted sighs,
A quivering opening of the eyes,
That seemed already dim and glazed—
And once the arm was feebly raised
That hung down wounded by the side—
Yet still unceasingly she tried,
Though once she glanced, when passing
by,
At Hugh O'Neil's dark towers, round
which,
Half hidden in obscurity,
And bordered with the beech-wood rich—
Many a green romantic steep
Rose boldly, from fair Erin's deep!
Then looked back anxiously, but all
Was dark in Ballynock's grim wall,
For even the pirates' torches bright,
Lit not the darkness of the night.

Music was heard and wine was poured
That night at Hugh O'Neil's proud
board—

His lofty halls rang back again
With laughter and with minstrel's strain.
And jewels flashed in raven hair,
For young and graceful forms were there.
Yet still the chief looked sadly on,
With brow and lips, stern-set and wan—
Though sometimes he would join the jest,
With hollow laugh, or sudden start—
While yet that brow, and lip compressed,
Showed sterner thoughts were in his heart.

The night has passed—the banquet o'er,
The sound of wassail heard no more—
The hall was chill—deserted—bare—
Yet Hugh O'Neil still lingered there!
And on his forehead, cold and damp
Gleamed the dull light of one pale lamp.

"Thou'rt surely ill," a soft voice said
And broke the silence, almost dread,
That in dim space now held its reign—
And roused the chieftain from his train
Of moody thought—"thou'rt surely ill—
Thy brow, my son, is strangely chill!
Why did'st thou, in the festive throng,
Join neither in the jest nor song,
But turn from minstrel's merry lay—
Thou! once the gayest of the gay!
Nay! smile not thus—too well I know
The smile of mirth from that of woe.
Alas! that very smile betrays
It is no trifling cause that weighs
So heavily upon thy mind. . . ."
Thus spoke the mother of O'Neil,
In those soft accents, meek and kind,
Few hear and yet refuse to feel.

The blush of anger, or of shame,
To Hugh O'Neil's proud temples came—
"I love not questions," he replied—
Then moodily he turned aside,
And sought a Gothic casement, placed
Within a dark recess, that faced
The marshy flat and lonely rock,
Known by the name of Ballynock.
'Twas strange! just then a vivid light
Brought those grim, distant halls to sight;
A brilliant glare—a bursting flame,
From tower—from turret, leaping came—
And as the chieftain wildly gazed
Fiercely it rose and fiercely blazed!

O'Neil rushed madly from the hall—
His mother heard his frenzied call—
"Ho! Morris—Rory—bring my steed,
And follow me with instant speed—"

And then there came the trampling sound
Of horse's hoofs on flinty ground,
And Hugh, who rode at furious rate,
Soon left behind the castle gate.

O'Neil took not the circling road,
But straight across the plain he rode.
The wind was sullen, shrill, and cold
And blowing o'er the open wold.
It had a weary, bitter tone,
'Twas almost like a spirit's moan,
It rose not ever loud or high,
But with a melancholy sigh
O'er reedy flats and fragments rent
From rocks, like ghostly Banshee went!
The partridge started from its nest,
The moorfowl left its rushy nest,
And raised its shrill, complaining cry,
As Hugh O'Neil dashed madly by.
The curlew joined its mournful wail
With the faint piping of the quail.
And far around each note was heard,
Across that flat and lonely waste,
As each bewildered, fluttered bird
Flew from its grassy home in haste!

He reached at last the burning hall,
Just as, like some funereal pall,
A column huge, of densest smoke,
From lofty roof—from lattice broke
Then passed away—while sullen glare
Of leaping flames was fiercely shed
Upon the hot and heavy air!
And yet—he thought, with sudden fear,
No voice—no cry fell on his ear—
He listened for some piercing call—
The roaring of the flames was all!
A chill ran through his curdling blood,
Cold drops of perspiration stood
Upon his brow—and yet it seemed
As though some exultation gleamed
Within those eyes' fierce brightness, ere
Quenched by some sudden doubt, or fear!

The eastern wing was half decayed,
Where flames their fiercest march had
made;

But Morna and her household dwelt
Within the western—this reposed
Unscathed as yet, but Hugh, who felt
There was no time to lose, unclosed
A postern door, within the wall;
And vaulted roof and noble hall
Soon echoed back his headlong tramp.
'Tis true, he had no guide, or lamp,

Nor needed them, the air was bright
With glowing flames, a blood-red light
Came from each casement that he passed,
And through the courts their shadows
cast—

While mingled with the roaring flame
Another sound rose, sadly clear,
The wail of lamentation came
Distinctly to the chieftain's ear!

Meantime the household of O'Neil
Had spared not spur, or goading steel,
But following him at utmost speed,
Each just had reined his foaming steed
As, issuing from a postern door,
A form dishevelled, pale, yet fair,
Into the open space he bore—
And laid her down in cooler air.
Then, as the flames grew fast and faster,
The search grew wilder for "the
Master"—

A search still vain, until they found
A track of recent blood, and traced
Its course without the castle's bound,
Then lost it in the marshy waste.

And now from distant hamlets came
The rustics—both the young and old,
Attracted by the lurid flame
That lit afar the marshy wold.
Was there among them who wept not
For Morna?—one who there forgot
For whom her hapless brother brought
Such fearful vengeance on his head?
Not one! who had not gladly fought
And cheerfully his life-blood shed
For Dermid—but that fatal hour
Pursuit, alone, was in their power.
This promptly they commenced—a boat
Was quickly manned and put afloat,
Although they knew the chance was
slight

Of chasing pirates such a night!
The rest remained and bravely toiled
To quench the flames, though often foiled,
And only paused when once they threw
A dark, suspicious glance at Hugh!

"Mount thou my steed," the chieftain
said,
His quick and ready page obeyed,
"And see a boat be instant manned
With bravest heart and boldest hand.
For I will at the first pale streak
Of morn, the pirate vessel seek."

Then Hugh returned to Morna's side,
Whose weeping maidens long had tried
To bring back life and warmth again
To their young mistress, but in vain.
It was a long, yet happy swoon,
In truth, the waking came too soon!
There is no bitterness so deep
Like that of waking, as from sleep,
To find some evil hand hath been
To blast our life's most cherished scene;
To feel the sad heart so oppressed,
Its dearest longing is for rest—
Though it might come with the dull
gloom

And voiceless silence of the tomb!
So Morna thought, as life returned,
And her foreboding heart had learned
Her brother's loss—the pirates' flight—
While burning towers that threw a light
Even to Dunhaven's distant crest
And pine-wood forests, told the rest!

The clouds were parted; soft and grey
Came the first breaking of the day.
Alas! that sunrise never more
Will throw its peaceful shadows o'er
That home she once had known so fair—
That long had been so loved a place—
And with a gesture of despair,
Poor Morna hid her tear-stained face—
While, breaking on her bitter grief
Thus gently spoke the mountain chief.

"Lady," he said—"my home so near,
Why linger we in sorrow here?
My mother there awaits thee—I
Will chase the pirates o'er the sea—
The gleam of morn is in the sky,
I may not linger—even with thee."
He took her trembling hand and raised
Her shivering figure from the ground—
But Morna turned and long she gazed
Silent and speechless—as spell-bound.
Without a murmur or a sigh
She stood awhile—with tearless eye,
Mute, motionless as sculptor's clay—
Then hid her face and turned away.

CANTO III.

It was the noontide of a bright, warm day,
The air was scented with the summer
flowers,

The long grass rustled with the breeze's
play,
The wood-birds filled with song their
leafy bowers.
The bees were winging, with a drowsy tone
From the blue harebell to the sweet-briar
rose—
O'er earth and sky, o'er sea and rock,
were thrown
An air of loneliness and calm repose.
The wood-pigeons were cooing in the
shade—
The deer were basking in the sun's warm
smile—
The rivulets went murmuring through the
glade,
The fish-hawk watched the running
streams the while,
Or dived into the clear, pellucid flood,
Then, rising, shook around the diamond
spray,
As to some branch of broad, decaying
wood
It flew, to feast in quiet on its prey.

Deep in one of those sunny dells,
Whose banks are clothed with flower-bells,
Where human steps were known to pass
But rarely o'er its haunted grass—
Where human voices echoed not—
There yet remained a ruined cot.
It suited well that greenwood scene,
Its broken roof with moss was green—
And birds, or winds, had sown the seeds
Of hardy plants or creeping weeds,
In crevices of broken wall,
Or where the woodwork seemed decayed,
Of lovely ferns, or foxglove tall,
To crown the ruins Time had made!
Though scarcely boasting chair or bed,
Yet was this hut inhabited.
A woman, withered, old, and wan,
Was basking in the glowing sun,
That shone in through the open door—
And seemed as though she muttered o'er
Some magic charm, or potent prayer,
As her shrunk hand arranged with care
Herbs, gathered in the dead of night,
Or culled beneath the pale moonlight—
When fairies wake their harps' soft strain,
Or darker spirits hold their reign.
One who, if we might Fame believe,
By magic process, could with ease
The couch of bitter pain relieve—
Cure fatal wounds, or dire disease!

Another inmate, too, was there,
 With youthful brow and raven hair,
 Who once was beautiful—her face
 Still something had of beauty's grace.
 But now that brow was marked—her eye
 Was restless, feverlit, and dry.
 A sullen, dull despair, a stern
 Unwavering resolution, seemed
 Within those hollow orbs to burn—
 And sometimes even fiercely gleamed
 The hard look of revenge, within
 Its lightning brightness—then awhile
 It changed into a scornful smile—
 The smile of mockery and of sin.

She bent above a wretched bed,
 Where, wasted by long sickness lay
 One, o'er whose clammy brow had spread
 The very hue of soulless clay,
 And seemed to watch with half-drawn sigh
 And painful quivering of the eye,
 The light of intellect again
 Return to Dermid's wandering brain.
 The first glance of the conscious eyes
 Was one of wild, unmixed surprise—
 Then, as he raised his languid head,
 In faint and faltering tones, he said—
 "My sister"—"She is safe"—"Then
 how

Is it that I am here, and not
 With her, and who and what art thou—
 Why am I in this ruined cot?"

"Nay—hush thee—thou art far too
 pale,
 Too weak, to hear so long a tale."

Poor Dermid sank back slowly—closed
 His eyes—she deemed that he reposed,
 And watched in silence, but ere long
 He spoke again—in tones more strong.

"Nay, tell me all, for o'er my mind
 Suspicions, dark, but scarce defined,
 Have crowded, and are crowding still—
 Like some foreboding shade of ill.
 Fear not, my gentle nurse, but speak
 The strength of life hath come again—"
 A flush came o'er his sunken cheek
 As slowly he arose, with pain—
 "For all my recollections seem
 The misty memories of a dream—
 A frantic struggle—then a cry,
 That thrilled my frame with agony,
 My sister's voice! then faces grim
 And cruel as fiends seemed bending o'er

My own—then all grew dark and dim,
 And faded, and I knew no more.
 Thy voice is stranger to mine ear,
 Who art thou, and what brings me here?"

"I tell but what relates to thee—
 It matters not who I may be—
 Ask not details—enough, I heard
 Thou wert condemned to die, by those
 Whose deadly rage thou had'st incurred—
 The pirates' savage band—and I
 Resolved to snatch thee from their knife!
 I see that thou art wondering why
 A stranger's hand should save thy life—
 'Twas for thy gentle sister's sake—
 I knew her tender heart would break—
 And joy for me would be in vain
 If thou, so fondly loved, wert slain.
*My mother's eyes in death she closed,
 And blessed the spot where she reposed."*

Some mournful, overpowering feeling
 Seemed swelling in her heart, she bowed
 Her head, and with her hand concealing
 Her face, wept bitterly—aloud.
 And yet, ere long, in firmer strain
 And calmer voice, resumed again.

"Alas! there seemed no help, and I—
 I felt—I feared—that thou must die,
 Unless I should betray thy foes,
 And bring down ruin, both on those
 That hated thee and one whose hand
 Was in, but yet abhorred the plot.
 For there is one in that dark band,
 Who, though my heart may love him not,
 With generous pity gave me all
 I have of peace and comfort here—
 And I would not that he should fall—
 Though for myself I know not fear!
 One hope there is, but faint indeed,
 Yet cherished as a last resource,
 As drowning men will grasp the reed,
 And think to stem the current's force;
 But time is passing—To be brief,
 The night of one dark expedition,
 O'More was sent out by his chief—
 I need not tell on what commission.
 Enough—one dark and stormy night
 We met, and we concealed our barque
 Where there was neither shore nor light—
 Within a sheltered creek and dark—
 We knew that, e'er their work was o'er
 Of pillage—hours might pass away—
 And, entering by a secret door,
 We robbed the murderers of their prey!

For well I knew if aught of life
Was left thee—by their vengeful knife—
That Ulrique's magic spells once more
Life, sense and vigour could restore!
There's little more—save I have learned
Thy sister's towers thy foes have burned.
She—as O'Neil the merit claims
Of having saved her from the flames—
Will now his honoured guest remain.”

“And yet I know the lines of pain
That mark thy stern and knitted brow
Tell me thy tale unfinished now!”

“’Tis true! but if those lips of thine
Repeat the tale that now I tell,
Ruin must fall on me and mine—
Then hear—but use thy knowledge well.

“Beware, beware of Hugh O'Neil,
The chieftain of that pirate band—
Howe'er he may his hate conceal,
Thy murder by his lips was planned!
He hates thee, with a hate as fell
As ever human breast could swell.
And knows that Morna ne'er will give
Her hand to him while thou shalt live.
And many months ago, he swore
That he would wait and woo no more—
That Morna should, whate'er betide
Ere long become his own—his bride.
Nay, shake not wildly thus thy arm,
Hear me, young madman—and be calm!
Be calm—there is no danger yet—
He deems thy sun of life hath set;
He deems thy head is lying low,
And waits until the heavy blow
That now is pressing on her heart
May be removed—at least in part.
From his foul grasp or from the grave,
Remember—thou alone can'st save!

“Dost thou remember, weeks ago,
The Lady Una sent to pray
Thy sister would awhile forego
Her dreary residence—to stay
Within that lady's brighter one?
Can'st thou not guess *why* this was
done?

But that, as Morna shrank from glee
And mirth, she stayed, instead, with thee.
It was to veil, thus, from her sight,
The horrors of that fatal night!
Not that the Lady Una knew
Her son's dark union with the crew

Of pirates—gentle, meek, and kind,
She bends to his imperious mind,
Suspects not in the loved one ill,
Nor e'er disputes his haughty will.

“Dark is the soul of stern O'Neil,
His lip is smooth—his brow is steel,
And starts not at the boldest deed,
Whate'er may be the hearts that bleed.
He little knows what hand shall wreak
His ruin”—the triumphant glow
Of vengeance coloured her pale cheek,
As thus she spoke, and then the throe
Of anguish shook her wasted frame,
Yielding to burning tears of shame,—
“I see thou pitiest me—in vain
Thy lips would urge me break the chain,
That binds me still to those I hate—
'Tis vain to say, 'Tis not too late!
Thou little know'st how fastened in
Its links, become the slaves of sin!
And I am hopeless—helpless now—
But stay—for fever burns thy brow,
Rest, rest thy wearied brain, and I——”

She paused and waiting not reply
Rose hastily—her mantle wide
Drew round her form and left his side.

* * * * *

The flowers their tender leaves had
curled,
And slumbered in their woodland bowers;
The spell of rest crept o'er the world,
The sweet rest of the evening hours.
The shepherd left his sleeping fold,
The sun had set upon the lea,
The mists of evening swept the wold,
And night came on. Why lingers he,
The proud O'Neil, and still looks down
From heights on which the pine-woods
frown,

To bleaker hills, where lately stood,
Fringed by a line of gloomy wood,
The time-worn towers of Ballynock,
Once record of far prouder days?—
There now is but a barren rock,
To mock the traveller's wistful gaze!

“She must be mine”—he darkly said,
“Edgar and Dermid both are dead!
'Tis little I have now to fear—
She must be mine—the bitter tear
E'en now is dried—the brow is wan,
But grief's first heavy shock is gone—

All past remembrances, or all
Connected with her castle's fall,
Now it no longer meets the eye
Will soften, as the months go by"—

Even as he triumphed came the sound
Of footsteps on the stony ground!
The chieftain turned, but stood transfixed,
For fear and horror both were mixed
In the wild glances of the eye,
The frame that shook with agony.
'Twas Dermid! by that bearing proud—
Though like a spectre in its shroud,
Yet with the bright eye none could tame,
'Twas Dermid, changed and yet the same!
Emaciated, wan and pale,
He looked as though the ghastly tale
Of Death were written on his brow—
"O! why, pale spectre of the dead,
Dost thou return to haunt me now?"
The conscience-stricken chieftain said.
"So much of misery and of ill
As thou hast caused me while in life—
Wilt thou return to haunt me still—
And plunge my soul in darker strife?"

"Chief of O'Neil—thou dost but rave,
I am no spectre from the grave—
No doubt"—said Dermid, with a sneer,
"The brave O'Neil is glad to hear
I have escaped the pirate band,
To mar the crimes their chieftain
planned."

The cheek that first with fear had paled
With deeper shame that instant burned—
Hugh knew his self-command had failed—
Yet proudly, fiercely, he returned
The scornful and contemptuous glance
That shot from Dermid's countenance.
Then turned away his conscious eyes,
And muttered something of surprise
And pleasure—what he scarcely knew—
Ruin—discovery seemed impending—
His fears each moment wilder grew
For Conscience her sure aid was lending—
And stung by grief and pale with hate
He followed through the castle gate.

* * * * *

Morna was lying on a couch, her eyes
Seemed watching calmly twilight's sombre
dyes
Steal slowly, pensively across the bay,
Deepening with the declining hours of
day:

Her head was resting on her snowy arm—
But Dermid started at that perfect calm,
And lifted tenderly the drooping head,
And pressed the nerveless hand—but life
had fled!

* * * * *

Some weeks had passed, and when his
strength returned,
The deeply injured brother only burned
To meet his foe upon the battle-plain.
They met and rumour said O'Neil was
slain.
Though legends differ on this point, some
say
He died within a convent far away.
One thing at least is certain—never more
Were seen his footsteps on his native
shore.

END OF THE LEGEND

OCCASIONAL PIECES.

THE MOTHER'S FAREWELL.

I HAVE watched over thee for many years—
Thou hast had all my hopes and all my
fears.
Heaven only knows how anxious was the
task
Of guiding thy young footsteps—but I ask
But one reward—refuse me not that one—
Return to me as now thou art, my son!

Thou leavest me—I shall not see thee
more,
Till years of tearful absence have passed
o'er.
Thou leavest me—to cross the Indian seas,
To brave the dangers of the Sutlej wild—
But oh! it is not perils such as these
I fear the most for thee—mine only child!

Thou goest forth into a world of strife—
Thy barque will bear thee to a pleasant
coast—

But be not tempted by the worldling's life,
Or envious of the pleasures he may boast.
Return not to me with the brow of
shame—
Wring not my heart with thy dishonoured
name!

Forget thou not the lessons I have
taught—

Remember, O my son! that pleasures
bought

By sacrifice of duty, ever leave
Upon the heart and brain their dark
impress—

Thy better part, despite thyself, will
grieve—

Thou may'st conceal it, yet not mourn the
less!

Be kind, forgiving — be thou firm in
right—

Pity the weak—exult thou not in might—
Go, then, my son—my fond and fervent
prayer

Will follow, o'er the paths of the deep sea,
In joy, in sorrow—here and everywhere—
Thy mother's heart will still remember
thee.

I have watched over thee for many years—
Thou hast had all my hopes and all my
fears.

Heaven only knows how anxious was the
task

Of guiding thy young footsteps—but I ask
But one reward—refuse me not that one—

RETURN TO ME AS NOW THOU ART, MY
SON.

THE STUDENT'S GARRET.

(Date about 1846.)

GLEAMING upon the moonlight scene,

With sickly and uncertain light,
The student's lonely lamp was seen,
Through the long, weary hours of night.

Yet, o'er that lone and thoughtful one

There bent a night so calm and fair
Its loveliness might well have won

His spirit from all thoughts of care!
Grey halls and towers, time-worn and
rent,

And columns, shadowy and dim,
And many a pallid monument

That age had rendered stern and grim—

Yet beautified by moonlight thrown
Upon their crumbling forms of stone—

Stood up, mysterious, silent, proud,
Each like some spectre in its shroud!

O God! of all the tearless hours,

The quiet rest that Thou hast given,

To cheer this chequered life of ours,

Until its earthly links are riven—

Thou hast no gift that e'er can bring

Such peace to weary heart and brain,

Or change its look of suffering

To one as pure and calm again,

As moonlight on the summer deep,

Like Thy one gift of dreamless sleep!

Yet still, as moonlight passed away

And starlight faded from the sky,

The student, by his lonely ray

Sat reading, with unwearied eye!

And stars and moon looked gently down

With pitying, kind, and loving glance,

Through the soft locks of palest brown,

That framed that thoughtful counten-
ance.

Alas! though hope and strength might
now

Shine on that young, determined brow,

The spirit yet may be o'ercast,

Th' avenging shadow fall at last!

Years since that brilliant moonlight
night had flown,

And daylight's last and melancholy
smile,

Through casement frames of grey and
crumbling stone,

Lit a cathedral's dim and solemn aisle.

So sadly, too, and mournfully upon

Pillar and arch and architrave it shone,

It almost seemed as though its light had
caught

A tinge of human care, of grief, and
thought,

From the deep silence of the cloisters grey,

Grim homes of gloomy brooding and
decay,

Where, all oblivious of past hopes and
crimes,

The love, ambition, hate, of other times,

Each in his last and dreamless home
enclosed,

The dead—the pale, unheeding dead—
reposed!

O'er the dark woods a knell's deep voice
was borne

And the brown leaves of autumn seemed
to mourn,

And the cold flower-leaves in the copse-
wood curled

And shivered, as the sullen tones went
by—

O God! 'tis sad to gaze upon the world,
 And watch its brightest things decay
 and die,
 To know a deep, blue sky is o'er us
 bending,
 And sunlight on the fair green earth is
 shed,
 E'en while a hoarse and solemn voice is
 sending,
 Through the calm air its wailing for the
 dead!

The dew fell heavily, as sunset's smile
 Passed from each gravestone and its
 grassy mound,
 And round the proud cathedral's dusky
 pile,
 The wind was whistling with a dreary
 sound—
 And through the vaults of death and
 cloisters damp
 It came and went, unfelt, unheard by all,
 E'en where, beneath the heavy, sable pall,
 Lay the young student of the midnight
 lamp.

Oh! if that eye could raise its heavy lid,
 To look back on the loved spot of its
 birth,
 And if that heart could feel, as once it did,
 A fellow-pilgrim of our weary earth--
 Even if its share of human suffering
 Deeply in its sojourn it had felt,
 Still with one yearning feeling it would
 cling
 To those sad, toiling homes where it
 had dwelt—
 And sigh to leave the lightless tomb, to
 cheer
 The ceaseless grief of those remaining
 here—
 Until they, too, the weary path had trod,
 That leads us to our resting-place—and
 God.

LINES TO —.

I SOMETIMES feel, love, when the moon
 is out.
 And shining down on us with its calm
 light,
 And bats in the grey twilight flit about,
 And trees grow shadowy in the deepen-
 ing night—

As if in those delicious, solemn hours,
 The world were far too glorious to be
 ours;
 As if a thought of bitterness and pain,
 Could never dwell within my heart
 again.

FATHER! the world that Thou hast given
 us,
 Seems far too fair and pure for grief
 or sin;

'Tis beautiful to watch it slumbering thus—
 To watch star after star come stealing
 in,

Or the first streak of moonlight on the
 sky,

And listen for the curlew's shrilly cry,
 And hear the leaves shake, with a faint,
 soft sound,

As if they feared to break the silence
 round—

To watch the owl fly round the ivied wall,
 And know that Thou art watching over all!
 One star is rising now, though dim and
 pale,

Its light is glimmering faintly o'er our
 vale—

Dear love! above the roar and the dull
 sound,

That murmurs from thy far-off city
 dwelling,

How calmly it may shine upon thee,
 telling

Of that fair home to which we both are
 bound!

Go on in thy bright path, beloved—my
 heart

Is ever with thee in thy onward way,
 So far away from me as now thou art,

Thy spirit seems with me, each passing
 day.

Thou art my guardian angel, and each
 thought,

Each holy lesson that thy life hath taught,
 Is with me in all hours of joy and grief;

And in the evening when the day grows
 dim,

And the wind trembles, from flower leaf to
 leaf,

And night, with its deep shadows, lies
 before us,

And the heart turns from worldly thoughts
 to Him,

Whose kind, forgiving eye is ever o'er us,

Thy words seem spoken by each leaf and flower,
Thy spirit breathing in each passing hour.

Farewell, beloved! the stars have passed away—
 May joy and sunshine follow on thy way.
 And oh! while thy heart, dear, is with me still,
 Thy love—that shields me in each hour of ill,
 I *know*—no moment even of grief can be,
 But it will bind me more to God—to thee.

THE DYING GIRL.

FAREWELL—farewell!
 Thou'rt dying with the spring of life before thee—
 Thou'rt dying, while the primrose and bluebell
 Are blooming, and the fair sky bending o'er thee—

Thou'rt dying while thy braided tress is dark,
 Without one white line of decay to speak—
 Ere thy smooth brow betrays one wrinkled mark,
 Or one line mars the beauty of thy cheek!

A little time—in the sepulchral shroud
 And winding-sheet, unfeeling hands have wound thee,
 And thy pale, thoughtful brow, so gently proud,
 Rests calmly as the senseless dead around thee.

A little time, and thy bright intellect
 May lend itself to earthly things no more—
 The powers of thy lofty mind be wrecked,
 And the deep musings of thy heart be o'er.

Thou'rt dying, though thy dear eye's sunny blue
 Is sparkling with a softly brilliant light,

And on thy youthful cheek there is a hue
 That seems for death too deeply rich and bright!

Yet thou wilt die in girlhood's sunny hours,
 With the fair spring-time of thy life before thee,
 Thou'rt dying while the primrose and spring flowers
 Are blooming, and the blue sky bending o'er thee.

And spring will pass—pass without thee to mourn
 Its dying flowers, as thou hast done before—
 And summer fade and spring again return
 And yet again, but never bring thee more!

And yet we dare not mourn that this must be,
 For now thy gentle spirit will have passed
 Before one evil breath hath withered thee—
 Without one shadow on thy beauty cast.

It might have been if years had been thy lot
 Thy heart had not been always calm as now—
 Or sorrow's blight—disease's sadder blot
 Had stained thy beautiful and placid brow.

His will be done, then, Who first placed thee here—
 To us is known not things of future days,
 And we must worship still in awe and fear,
 For human minds can fathom not His ways.

LOVE! THERE ARE DAYS.

LOVE! there are days when I still live again
 Through all our past of mixed delight and pain,
 Days when the future shone so bright and clear
 O'er the gilt clouds of the departing year,

When Hope smiled out through evening's
closing portal,
When Grief stayed not and Love appeared
immortal!

How dear to me hath been thy brow
serene,
What power sustaining thou hast ever
been!
Thy noble heart was ever strong to bear,
Scorning all tremors of my weak despair.
Scarce had I lived without thy tender
touch,
That gave such comfort—that upheld so
much!

No weak and useless aims thy hours em-
ployed,
Not thine the noisy fame that some
enjoyed,
Yet hundreds praised thee—hundred lips
have taught
The truths *thy* words of hope and faith
inspired,
The joy thy words of comfort ever
brought—
The noble efforts thy brave words have
fired.

Helping the buoyant youth upon his way,
Soothing the sad fears of a parting day,
Few heroes e'er deserved more praise
than thou
For deeds of unpretending greatness done,
No nobler laurels e'er can crown a brow
Than thou, with thy long patient toil,
hast won!

THE HOME OF MY CHILDHOOD.

HOME of my childhood, green and placid
spot,
Meet dwelling-place for those that sigh
for peace,
Shunned by ambition and where wars
ragged not,
Beloved and wept for until life shall
cease—

There tumult and unrest
Slept in my youthful breast,
I knew not life, save ever to rejoice,
For through that peaceful glade,
My childhood's fancies strayed,
Nor listened to Ambition's dark, insidious
voice.

No feverish pulse was stirred,
No trumpet's blare was heard,
No echoes of despair, of battle and of strife;
The cooing of the dove,
The voice of peace and love,
These simple notes of calm, of pleasure,
were my life.

Through summer's brilliant day
The children, at their play,
Full oft made glad the sweet and peaceful
air—
The sounds of simple joys
No fierce, wild note destroys—
Day brought no hopeless grief and evening
no despair.

DREAMS OF THE PAST.

O visions of times gone by,
Ye come with a tear, or sigh,
With a weary brow and a sad and shadowy
form,
With a half-reproachful gaze,
And a murmur of better days,
When a youth's bright hopes were high,
and a poet's fancy warm.

O visions of joys no more,
Of pleasures that long are o'er,
Thy glance is cold and thy footsteps dull
and slow;
And ye speak with a mournful tone,
A sound that is half a moan,
As ye tell of the happy days that are now
so long ago.

Ye speak of decay and death,
With a faint and faltering breath,
Of delights that are long since dimmed,
of a broken heart;
Ye tell how our young hopes fail,
How the brow grows weary and
pale,
As the visions of love and the hopes of
youth depart.

Yet still would I fondly pray,
For one hour of a bygone day,
When love was constant and youth's bright
hopes were high,
When our fears of change were
brief,
And we knew no thought of grief,
So lived for love and for joys that cannot
die!

THE MOTHER AND HER THREE
DAUGHTERS.

O'ER the dark waters of the stormy bay,
With straining eyes and pallid, parting
lips,
She sees the fluttering pennants fade away,
Of one of Albion's noble home-built
ships.

She sees, with sad, prophetic eyes, the
flash
Of lightning, as it gilds the crowded
deck,
She hears the deafening thunder—the
fierce dash
Of seething waters through the groaning
wreck.

Trembling she turns away her inward gaze,
From all sad visions of her far-off child,
And seeks near home for calmer, brighter
days,
For hopes more peaceful, and for skies
less wild.

There bends a face that she can ne'er
forget,
Pure as the snowdrop, sweet as
"Violet,"*

Whose ear lists ever to another's moan,
Forgetful of all echoes of her own.

A brow of pallor, oft of bitter pain,
Yet one whose heart is in another's
woes,
With lips that bless or praise, but ne'er
complain;
With angel footsteps through the world
she goes.

Another by an English hearth she sees,
A face all glowing with a mother's joy,
Watching the pretty gambols on her knees,
The rippling laughter, of her noble boy.

She hath, as yet, a calm, untroubled lot,
Unbittered by despair, unstained by tears;
And yet we dare not, on earth's changeable
spot,
Foretell the sunshine of our unborn
years.

THE BROTHER SPIRITS OF
DEATH.

(An old Poem.)

"I always fancy that Death should be represented
by two brothers, one an angel, the other a demon, who
travel separately about earth; the first on an errand
of mercy, the last to inflict misery!"—BYRON.

'Tis the fairest hour of our lovely earth,
When the bright sun is descending,
And a soft grey light in her bowers of
mirth

With the sunset's gold is blending;
When the heat and the toil of the day
are o'er,
And the voice of the world is heard no
more;
But fairer that hour when shared with thee;
Then come to the greenwood, love, with
me!

Come to the forest's massive shade,
Come to the banks of the mossy glade,
Where nought but the rustling moan is
heard

Of the autumn leaves, by the faint wind
stirred,
And the heart is awed by the want of
sound,

By the solemn hush of the gloom around.
Come! there are few that wander now,
For the world is calm and still,
And the bird is slumbering on the bough,
And the wild deer on the hill.

But hush! there are two that linger yet,
Watching the rich and red sunset—
And the brows of both are young and fair,
Unwithered, as yet, by the touch of care;
And the sound of their laugh is soft and
sweet
And bright is the smile when their dark
eyes meet.

But the maiden has paused where the
flowers are fair,
While he twines a wreath in her flowing
hair.

Oh! ask not what are the words they
breathed,
And ask not why are their fond arms
wreathed—

* Violet was her Christian name.

Thou may'st read the tale in the dark,
 soft eye,
 Whose glance half seeks, half shuns
 reply—
 Thou may'st guess what words can ne'er
 express,
 In the timid—half withdrawn caress,
 And deem that happiness still may dwell
 Where once from her empire hurled,
 And many a heart with rapture swell,
 Unknown to the busy world.
 But a change hath come o'er the clear,
 blue sky,
 The Demon of Death is hurrying by!

* * * * *

* * * * *

Now come with me—'tis that hour of
 night
 When the earth is lit by the pale moon-
 light—
 When the stars steal forth in the twilight
 sky,
 And the hollow wind forgets to sigh.
 Lo! under yon yew tree's dismal gloom
 Thou see'st a lonely, fresh-made tomb—
 'Tis the grave of her with the fair young
 brow
 Whom thou saw'st in the woods—it seems
 but now.
 But the fairest flower is borne away
 From the earth to the tomb in an hour,
 or day!
 Oh! little thought thou—when thou saw'st
 her there,
 Braiding the flowers in her glossy hair,
 The Demon of Death, with his poisonous
 breath,
 Was pressing her glowing lips,
 And the flower was doomed, ere it scarce
 had bloomed,
 For a long and dark eclipse.

But he—whom I saw by that maiden's
 side—
 Doth *he* live, to mourn for his hapless
 bride?

He lives—but his spirit passed afar—
 And he may not sleep where the wild
 flowers creep,
 In the grave where his hopes, all
 mouldering are.

But dwells on the earth, unloved—alone—
 Some say that his mind is now o'er-
 thrown—

Some say that his young and noble brow,
 Is furrowed by grief and suffering now.
 They say that his heart is cold and
 changed,

That, ever, from others, he keeps
 estranged—

That his auburn hair is thin and white,
 And the form is bent that was once up-
 right,

And they tell me the light will ne'er
 again

Return to his seared and shattered brain—
 For the stamp of a fearful power is there,
 The stamp of a fixed and dark despair!

* * * * *

'Twas night and the winds blew cold
 and shrill,

And a tempest raged in wood and hill,
 And a torrent swelled in the rocky glade,
 And ruin was spreading wide,
 As a wretched wife knelt down and
 prayed

By her dying husband's side.
 And the thunder roared through her
 dwelling rude,

And the lightning flashed—in the inter-
 lude—

And shone on the languid head that lay
 On her thin and wasted arm,
 And the face was fair as the sculptor's
 clay,

But oh! it was scarce more warm.
 And the eyelids drooped o'er ~~the~~ eye's
 wan light

As though they never could rise again;
 And the pale lips seemed compressed and
 tight,

Yet quivered, at times, in pain.
 And she who over that figure bent,
 Whose heart to each throb of his was lent,
 How bore *she* up in that gloomy hour
 That tries the soul to its utmost power?
 Oh! though full many a haggard trace
 Could sorrow claim in that pallid face,
 Though want had stolen the rosy hue,
 From that deathlike cheek and those lips
 of blue,

And wrinkled her cheek with many a
 mark

And whitened the hair—once soft and
 dark,

It never could quell the spirit high
That dwelt in that dark, expressive eye,
That spoke of a mind both firm and strong,
And said she could suffer much, and long!
She scarcely heeded the thunder's roar,
Or the wind that howled through the
broken door,

She trembled not at the raging storm,
But sadly bent o'er her husband's form,
And soothed his brow with her gentle
touch,
And moistened his lips with her falling
tears—

And felt, though she long had suffered
much

That moment outweighed the grief of
years.

"They say that grief is more lightly borne
When we have one *with us* to mourn";
She said, in a low and faltering tone,
As she kissed the brow that was now like
stone,

"But oh! I would rather pine alone
In a place where none might hear me
moan,

And know thou wert far away, and free
And happy, as one on earth may be,
Than see thee, love, in thy youth die
thus—

And the dark grave yawn for both of us."

* * * * *

* * * * *

The scene was changed, and the
tempest's blast

With the cold and dreary night had
passed,

And morning came, and the blue sky
smiled

On a cottage lone, in a moorland wild.

But oh! within was a calm more deep

Than the calm of that outward scene,
For there was a breathless, dreamless
sleep,

Where sorrow but now had been!
And there was rest for the broken heart,
And rest for the eyes that wept;
A rest that could never more depart
From the eyes of those that slept.

The brow was eased of its load of care,

And the sad heart beat no more;

For the Angel of Death was dwelling
there,

And the sufferer's woes were o'er.

A BOUNDLESS EMPIRE; OR, LA CALOMNIE—THE MIGHTY EMPRESS.

I HAVE been a mighty traveller, I have
seen unnumbered lands,
And my swift, unwearied glance has
swept the wildest desert sands.

I have scaled the loftiest heights by
human vision ever seen—
And through the darkest valleys have my
curious footsteps been.

I have been a mighty traveller—I have
breathed Sahara's air,

I have strayed through densest forests,
where the homes are few but fair—

And when I saw a casement that seemed
far too bright and clean,

I have breathed upon it heavily, then
passed away unseen!

I have been a mighty traveller, and my
steps were full of joy,

When with Paris and frail Helen I was
gay in ancient Troy,

To Telemachus alone, I ever failed to
deal a blow,

While Minerva was beside him to protect
the boy from woe.

I have dwelt within the palace, I have
lingered in the cot,

There is no sacred refuge or retreat that
knows *me* not!

I have whispered words of misery to the
happy and the young,

I have wakened ghastly music when the
harpstrings were unstrung.

No one can ever conquer me, my power
is over all,

And even the mightiest empires I have
shaken to their fall—

Nay! often have I held in bond the
proudest heart and hand,

For even Death itself obeys *my* whisper
or command.

If the path thy foes are travelling seems
to thee too fair and bright,

If there is glowing brilliancy where thou
would'st have it night,

Invoke me in the sunshine, or invoke me
in the shade,
I am ever near — and solemnly I
promise thee my aid.

November, 1880.

DYING WORDS.

(DATE, BEFORE 1844.)

My friend, the world is fading from my
sight—

Unclose the casement—let the sun's
warm smile

Yet once again my darkened vision
light—

'Tis well, now hear me patiently awhile!
The hand thou claspest in thine own—that
thin

White hand, a few years back was firm
and strong.

O! if to scorn existence be a sin,

'Tis one that will be charged on me ere
long!

For I am prematurely old, and now
When other men are in their very
prime,

Dying, I lift to heaven my haggard brow,
Imploring grace—forgiveness—for the
crime

Of having wasted, in the heart's mad
grief,

Each noble purpose of a human soul;

Asking no counsel—seeking no relief—

My sorrow was indeed without control!

Death's voice is in mine ear, or I would
fain

Live yet—repentant—but I must
submit—

I pray not, even—for such prayer were
vain—

For further time than daylight may
permit.

This only, O my God! I dare to ask—
That Thou wilt grant me, while yet life
shall last,

Such strength as may fulfil a farewell
task,

Whose pangs may win some pardon for
the past.

Thy days are young, my friend—the world
is still

A mystery to thee—with its sin and
strife—

Bear with my failing accents and I will
Teach thee one lesson of its dreary
life.

I have been much a wanderer, both by
land

And sea—and dwelt where Indian sun-
light smiles—

Braved the sirocco of the Lybian sand,
And mused a summer in the Western
Isles.

Still the remembrance of one English
spot,

Like some lost Eden ever haunted
me—

I could have wished below no happier
lot,

Than life, in that sweet vale beside the
sea!

Full of true village pictures—calm and
green—

Meet for the peasant or the poet
life—

It wore no features of a sea-coast scene,
The screaming petrels knew it not—
the strife

Of winds and waves but faintly met the
ear,

Of him who wandered on the hills at
eve,

To watch the storms of sultry skies draw
near,

Or the white bosom of the ocean heave!

'Tis sadly altered now—so I am told—
Its noble woods have fallen, and the
bold,

Far-stretching hills lie desolate and bare,
Swept by the fierce winds of an open
sky—

With only shelter for the timid hare,
Such as the heath and furzen may
supply.

Fresh flowers and leaves with spring-time
come no more,

The sheep feed unrestrained upon the
waste—

The sportsman strides across the open
moor,

Nor knows what holy ground his steps
have traced!

When first I saw it spring was in its
prime,

The gentle winds that fanned my youth-
ful face,

Filled with the fragrance of that most
sweet time,

Told of the violet's secret dwelling-
place;

Eve fell as, in returning through the
glade,

I came upon a rustic cot that stood
Deep in the shadow of a sylvan wood.

There dwelt a village child, whose
glorious face

Shone like a meteor in that homely
place.

Such eyes as hers mine own had never
seen,

Nor yet a brow more peaceful—calm—
serene,

Lips that could smile the softest smile of
earth,

Yet brightly part with ringing, childlike
mirth.

This happened years ago, but I have
read

Since then the story of her sad career—
Alas! upon its pages have been shed

Full many a penitent and bitter tear!
She who had no companions, found relief,

When left in solitude and worn with
prayer,

In making records of her joy and grief—
That piteous record have I still, but
dare

Not look upon its trembling lines again! *
Those broken characters would waken
yet

Too much of human frenzy for the brain
Of one whose star of life is almost
set.

Entomb them on my bosom, I implore—
I ask of thy long friendship only this,

That never eye of stranger ponder o'er
Its wild, fierce words of doubt, despair,
or bliss.

I tell, alas! no new, romantic tales—
Yet common as they are all effort fails

To speak the thoughts of madness they
recall—

The hopes—the fears—the struggle and
—the fall!

So fare thee well—the time is flitting,
fast—

I die—not in the present—but the past!

THE MOTHER'S LAMENT.

(DATE, BEFORE 1844.)

THEY bore her from her father's hall,

The beautiful! the young!
And o'er her form the sable pall
In gloomy grandeur hung.

They bore her from each cherished scene,
From ruin wild and grey,
From mountain brook, from forest green,
They bore her far away—

And laid her in the silent tomb
All feelingless and cold,
They laid her in the damp and gloom,
And o'er her trod the mould.

And evening came—without a cloud
The summer's sun had set,
But twilight's soft and dusky shroud
O'er earth was lingering yet.

And one pale star—one lonely star
Came stealing to the sky,
And soft, calm light it shed afar,
From its lone space on high.

And on the face of one it smiled,
Who o'er a grave was weeping,
Alas! alas! her only child
Beneath the sod was sleeping!

Her countenance was worn with woe,
And mournfully she spoke,
Yet gentle was the voice and low,
That on the silence broke.

"They've laid thee in the cold, damp
grave, the last long home of rest,
They've laid thee in the cold, damp
grave, the sod is o'er thee pressed.

And I shall never see thee more, the voice
I loved is stilled,
Thy warm and gentle heart, my child, the
hand of Death hath chilled.

"Yes! I shall never see thee more, thy
brilliant eye is shaded—
The soft, deep bloom upon thy cheeks for
ever now has faded,

* It is impossible not to have longed to read that mysterious record, but it was honourably buried with the dead—its contents unknown.

Thy hand is damp and powerless—thy
dark and glossy hair,
All—*all* are shrouded in the tomb—in
darkness spoiling there.

“Oh! I shall miss at break of morn, thy
footsteps gay and light,
And I shall miss thy soothing hand and
tender voice at night—
Yet—dearest, I will weep no more, for
brighter far must be
The home that thou hast gone to seek,
than that thou shared'st with me.

“Thou'rt sheltered now for ever from all
earthly trial and woe,
The pangs of disappointment, love, thou
never now can'st know—
Of envy, or of love misplaced—affection
unrequited—
That might have crushed thy spirit or its
native freshness blighted.

“Yes, dearest, I will weep no more, for
we again shall meet,
Where I shall hear thy gentle voice—so
musical and sweet,
Where sorrow is unknown and where
affection is uncrossed,
There shall I meet thee once again—my
beautiful! my lost!”

A THOUGHT.

(DATE, BEFORE 1844.)

Too much the human heart is given
To sigh for what it cannot get—
Except the prize that men call Heaven,
And this some scorn and some forget!
Perchance it is when they despair
Of ever being welcome there!

Each sighs for something out of reach,
Some El Dorado just in view—
But if each soaring mind but knew

The troubles that belong to each,
The cottage girl would scarcely sigh
To leave her own calm wooded dell,
The colours of a deep, blue sky,

In rich and castled halls to dwell!
Or beggar prize the miser's hoard,
Or sailor envy landed lord.

To all are sorrows—though to some
With such o'erwhelming power they come
Health, energy and hope are wrecked
Nay—even, perchance, the intellect!

But oh—to *some* that purest grief
That turns from earth to One above,
And looks for mercy and relief
To Him “Who chastens but in love.”

L'HISTOIRE SE RÉPÈTE.

(DATE, BEFORE 1844.)

THE little stream that rises from the hill
Swell to a mighty river at its base,
Bearing broad ships upon its bosom; still
We see the same marked features on its
face.

A thousand years—the world is still the
same,
Gloomy with tempests—sparkling in the
sun—

Nature and ages differ but in name,
The next will finish what was last
begun.

E'en Nature's face scarce shows a wrinkle
more,
Though kingdoms change and centuries
roll o'er!

PEACEFUL REFLECTIONS.

(DATE, BEFORE 1844.)

MY own true friend, the day is slowly
dawning,
Methought the dreary night had never
passed!

That I should never live to see the morning,
Yet slowly, peacefully it breaks at last.
What will arise in those unfolded years,
Whose unknown scenes are yet before
mine eyes—

Will they bring bitterness, regret, and tears,
Or calm and peace upspring, as sorrow
dies?

God only knows! in patience we must wait,
Sorrow comes early—joy is oftentimes late.
And trustful ever must we wait the close
Of winter's storms — the dawn of
Heaven's repose.

MOORISH BURIAL CHANT.

(DATE, BEFORE 1844.)

WE lay her in her last, still home, the
damp and dreary grave,
Though she is fairer than the flowers that
o'er her sadly wave.

We lay her in the darkness there—ye call
 her back in vain—
 Mourn for her, oh! mourn for her—she
 cannot come again!

We looked on her but yesterday, when
 light was in her eye,
 We looked on her but yesterday and said
 —“She cannot die!”
 So full of glowing life she seemed—alas!
 how altered now—
 For Death hath borne her far away—oh!
 stranger—ask ye how!

It was as spring’s first leaf, that breaketh
 when the winds sweep o’er it—
 And fling it on the wintry ground, yet
 leave the branch that bore it.
 It was as droops a lonely rose-bud,
 gathered scarce in bloom,
 Yea—silently as falls a star, Death bore
 her to the tomb!

Mourn for her, sad lover—lo, thy cherished
 hope has fled—

Mourn for her, sad father, mourn—thy
 only child is dead!

O! vainly do ye call her back—ye have
 not now the power,
 To join the broken heart again—to raise
 the trampled flower.

Pour forth the parting song and fling the
 last buds on the bier,

Ah, lover—father—gaze once more—thy
 cherished hope lies here!

We lay her now beneath the earth—ye call
 her back in vain—

Then mourn for her, oh! mourn for her—
 she cannot come again!

HIS QUESTION.*

HAST thou forgotten that green, shady
 slope,
 Where once we sat and talked of love—
 alone,

When thy soft eyes were full of light and
 hope,
 And mine were almost joyous as thine
 own?

Hast thou forgotten that dark, spreading
 tree,
 Beneath whose shade I told fond tales
 to thee?

HER ANSWER.

It would be better far *could* we forget
 That we had ever loved—had ever met.
 Yet—there is joy still in recalling back
 Each gleam of sunshine on that early
 track—

Ere yet we knew the hopeless withering
 Of early fancy—it is sweet to bring
 From memory’s mournful land the many
 hours

Of joy—the dreamy thoughts that once
 were ours.

’Tis all now left us of that peaceful past—
 And I *am* happy—while those memories
 last.

To dream again of thy young open brow—
 Alas! I feel I scarcely know it now!

To meet again each loving, trusting glance
 That *then* beamed brightly from thy
 countenance.

All that is left me—yes! but this is joy
 That neither time nor sorrow can destroy!

A REFLECTION.

AH! little can we know what grief and
 crime

May wait for us when we would hasten
 time,

And when the long and weary days have
 passed,

How often on its fleeting hours we cast
 Such glances of repentance or *despair*

’Tis more than even the stoical can bear.

O! could we but recall them—be again

All that we were—is then our prayer in
 vain!

LINES TO VIOLET.

(HER SECOND DAUGHTER.)

FAR more of Heaven than earth, my own,
 shines in thy calm and placid eyes,
 Though thou hast yet the warmest love for
 all our earthly loves and ties;

And yet there is a placid look, even in the
 hours of bitterest pain,

And few a peace so pure as thine can
 ever in this world attain.

Thy gentleness, thy calm submission, more
 of heavenly grace have taught

Than all the wisest sermons teach, or all
 by sore experience brought.

* Part of a story, the rest of which is lost.

The peace of Heaven is in thine eyes—so
 beautifully soft and clear,
 And even the accents of thy voice seem
 almost heavenly to mine ear.
 God is with thee, my darling, I can
 read it on thy gentle brow—
 O! if I ever trusted Heaven I know my
 trust is in Him now.
 Thy pure and sinless life has been a
 noble lesson to us all,
 Let those who think their footsteps firm
 take wiser heed for fear they fall!
 For they may boast their sinless lives yet
 there are few can live like thou,
 While racking pain thy frame disturbs,
but not the Patience on thy brow.

November, 1880.

TO WOMAN.*

WOMAN! from whom his first lisped
 prayer he learns,
 To whom in all his early woes he turns,
 In whose fond arms, upon whose faithful
 breast
 His cares are soothed—his troubles laid
 at rest—
 Who smiles with him in joy, grieves in his
 woes,
 And save when shared with him no
 pleasure knows,
 Heaven hath ordained her his one constant
 love,
 Both here on earth and in the world
 above!

MORNING.

Now voices pour forth on the busy air,
 Now riseth up the voice of earnest prayer,
 Now in the city stream the multitudes
 Into the court, the alley, and the streets!
 While from the depth of forest solitudes
 The breezes greet us with their woodland
 sweets.
 O morning! beautiful thou art, the while
 Thou pourest o'er the earth thy first glad
 smile.

EVENING.

So art thou lovely, evening! if less bright
 Than morning, and less peaceful than the
 night.

Fair—and yet so unlike the while—for one
 Brings the gay gladness of the laughing
 sun,
 Thou the deep softness and the calm
 repose,
 The tender silence of thy waning hours,
 That rest from all its busy, worldly woes,
 That makes earth seem too peaceful to be
 ours!

THE VEIL OF NIGHT.

(Written after driving through the City
 at night.)

NIGHT in the city walls!
 Deserted are the street and thoroughfare,
 The lights are gleaming in the festive
 halls,
 The lamps light idly the untrodden
 square.
 The deep hum of the mighty multitude,
 The roll of carriage wheels, are now
 subdued;
 Only the bell from the cathedral tower
 Is heard, to hoarsely toll the passing hour!

The moon is high in heaven,
 The stars are with her, and their mingled
 light,
 To tower and dome and monument are
 given,
 Looking far nobler in the sombre night
 Than in broad noontide; while a filmy
 cloud
 Across the atmosphere at times may fly,
 But cannot hide, with its pale, misty
 shroud,
 The deep blue beauty of that midnight sky!

O woe! that night so fair
 Should ever hide the pale brow of despair,
 The sunken cheeks, the hot, repentant
 tears,
 That tell a tale of sad, or misspent,
 years—
 That it should listen to the guilty rave
 Of those who, standing by the yawning
 grave
 Wringing their wasted hands, foresee their
 fate—
 And fain would fly, but know it then too
 late!

* The prefatory note to Mrs Dobell's work, "Versus a Woman pro Woman," 1880

O woe! that night so calm
Should bring with it the wild, imploring
prayer
Of hearts to which it can impart no balm,
Of spirits broken by the weight of care—
That when its shadow veils the midnight
skies,
To him whose brow by guilt is overcast,
The ghastly fantoms of the wronged
arise,
Demanding retribution for the past!

And woe—that night so pure,
Should not o'er scenes as pure its vigil
keep—
That its deep, heavy shadows should
allure
To reckless orgies, not to holy sleep.

That ever o'er the calm, unheeding earth,
Should steal its planet's penetrating ray,
To witness the unholy scenes of mirth
Man dares not frequent in the eye of
day.

O man!—too little wise,
And yet so boastful of his mind and
sense—
That he should watch the midnight stars
arise,
What time his secret revels to com-
mence—
Knowing the retribution time must bring,
The years of grief, of hopeless suffering
That wait for him—till weary of his woes
The dark grave o'er his whitened head
shall close!

IN THE WATCHES OF
THE NIGHT.

(ALL COMPOSED BETWEEN 1882 AND 1888.)



“ Watchman, will the night soon pass ? ”

PREFATORY NOTE BY THE AUTHORESS.

“IN THE WATCHES OF THE NIGHT” was chosen as the title of these Poems because nearly all of them were written in the neighbourhood of the Sea, between the hours of ten and two o'clock at night.

TOO LATE, AND OTHER POEMS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE HARP OF LOVE.

STRIKE the deep chords! O harpist, strike
those strings

That most disturb the dull and stagnant
air,

The music that most sweetly, sadly rings,
Yet shall not be the utterance of despair.

Strike the deep chords, and let the sad
world hear!

Ah! let not even thy deepest notes be
still;

Let thy song break upon the listening ear,
So that the dullest heart shall start and
thrill.

Strike the deep chords! the soul's wild
echoes lie

Beneath the long-drawn sweetness of
those notes,

Even as, through sunset's rich and burning
sky,

The sad strain of the "Miserere" floats.

Strike the deep chords! Ah! let us hear
once more

The strong yet tender echoes of the past!

Ah! let us feel as we have felt before,
So fancy love's wild dream shall ever
last!

Strike the deep chords—for in this world
below,

Thou, love, alone, shalt have a burning
shrine,

A something that shall have no feeble glow,
For glory, strength, and passion all are
thine.

For love shall blind the brightest, calmest
eyes,

Yet love shall be of life its truest part,
The love that in the pure heart never dies,
That fills with joy — *or breaks* — the
strongest heart.

TWO WORDS OF SORROW.

SAY! are there many words in life so sad
as these—TOO LATE!

As we stand before the rusted, or the ivy-
covered gate,

And know that on its hinges it shall open
never more,

Nor shall those through it march again,
who may have marched before?

The way is choked with briars and with
many a clinging grass,

With cruel ruins that but wound the feet
that o'er them pass;

Graves—graves! and withered stalks of
Life's most fair and broken flowers,

Mark, with heart-breaking tokens, all our
sweeter earlier hours.

Could we but tread those paths again with
wiser, happier tread!

Could we but bring back to their homes
the loved, the long-wept dead!

Yes! once again call back to our own
anxious, troubled breast,

What now lies in a perfect, and, it may be,
happy rest!—

Too late! alas! for us TOO LATE—the
time has now long passed,

The last sweet cherished flowers of Life
lie withered by the blast;

Only her waste, her vilest weeds oft gather
on thy soil,

And these, to now uproot, require thy
patience, time, and toil.

The tender petals of our roses shrivelled
are or shed,

Nor Autumn shall bring back to life what
flowers of her's lie dead;

And each one for himself the lesson learns,
none else can tell,

How often, often breathed, and yet how
hard that word—Farewell!

TOO LATE.

THE world had been one blaze of light,
Till shadows of the summer night
Fell down upon the plains and o'er
The woods, and Earth reposed once more.
And through the evening's fading glow
Went two, with faltering steps and slow,
With weary gesture and bent head,
And all they said was faintly said—

He had been pleading—with his heart
In every word—he could depart
With strength, he said, with but a sigh,
However faintly hope might burn,
If she would give him in reply—
If she would give him in return—
Ah! little did it seem to give—
One word of cheer on which to live!

"Alas! I love thee not," she said—
With gentle voice, averted head;
"It is not that I cannot feel
Thy heart as strong, as true as steel;
Nay! more than this, I *know*, indeed,
Thy heart is one for noblest deed!
This will I still believe of thee,
Howe'er apart our lives may be!

"Nor think thou that my heart is caught—
Nay! deem not I have even thought
Of any fancy of my own—
To me these visions are unknown;
Fantastic and unreal they seem
As shapes in some midsummer dream!
I only hope I ne'er may know
Of such—I *pray it may be so!*"

"I do not welcome strife—in brief,
I would be free from all such grief,
Such mixed delight, such woe and weal,
As they have said true lovers feel—
At least I would be yet awhile!"
She added, as the faintest smile
Passed, like a soft and rosy glow,
Across her girlish brow of snow,—

Then gently tinted her young face,
To leave behind not even a trace
Of light, but something rather sad,
As though so free yet scarcely glad
That on her fair young path should lie
No light from Love's immortal sky;
As though she felt o'ercloud her soul
A fate that she could not control.

No word of answer could he speak,
But shadows spread o'er brow and cheek;
He felt his sun of life had set—
Ah! would he only could forget!
He looked into her gentle face,
He saw where tears had left their trace—
And felt as trembling with the chill
Of Death! and she—she, too, was still!

And one by one the slow tears fell,
Though why, perchance, she scarce could
tell—

But oh! that face, so young, so set—
Ah! could she e'er again forget!
Again—again—and yet again
She saw those eyes of tender pain;
Through many weary after years,
They haunted her with nameless fears.

And still beneath those sunset skies
He looked into her pitying eyes,
With gaze so tender and so sad
It shook what little calm she had!
"Farewell!" he sighed, "we yet may
meet

When Fate is kind—where Life is sweet,
When this dark cloud shall pass away
Like mists upon a summer's day!—"

"Yet never shall we meet as now,
With that soft radiance on thy brow,
With that calm brightness in thy gaze
That knows no fear of coming days;
For something of thy future years
I read, through heavy mists of tears;
I see, through sweeping clouds of night—
Ah! that they were more fair and bright!"

"Alas! I know not what I dread!
But I have something—it is said—
Though little it may be, indeed,
Still *something*, of that power to read
The fate of our yet unborn days,
And little meets my longing gaze
Of brightness in that life that I
Would have as bright as yon fair sky!"

"Farewell! and yet once more farewell!
What grief it is *thou* can'st not tell
From all most dear in life to part—
To tear away my very heart;
To say this sad, the saddest word,
That ever ears of mortal heard—
Through all its crash of war, of strife,
To darken our dark human life!—"

Why did she miss him—it was strange!
 How should she miss him! yet a change
 Came slowly, gently o'er her brow,
 And she—she knew not why, or how—
 But something from her life had flown
 Of light; oh! had she only known!
 That light was even the first pale beam
 That gild's a lover's mystic dream!

She thought she missed him as a friend,
 For more she could not comprehend;
 She thought she missed him as we miss
 A friend's warm greeting, smile, or kiss,
 Or as we miss the summer sun,
 Departing as his work is done:
 Yes! something from her life had passed,
 And left it dull and overcast.

Even as a story that is told,
 A glowing season, now but cold,
 A brilliant star-beam passed away,
 A bright flower faded by the way.
 For something that once lived was
 dead—

A glory from her life had fled—
 A something that *had* been was void—
 A breathing joy had been destroyed.

So dull seemed now her life, she knew
 Nor toil nor pleasure to pursue,
 Nor trial of her girlish powers
 To cheer the weary, lagging hours;
 While each long hour, in passing, seemed
 Still longer, duller than the last;
 And nothing, day or night, redeemed
 The sadness of each week that passed!

Oh! this was folly! she would learn
 To wait in patience his return—
 Return! that word to some so sweet,
 Why will its echoes still repeat!
 And ring through all the hours, alas!
 And never, never seem to pass,
 Recalling each despairing word
 That from his parting lips she heard!

He said he should not come again
 Yet why is it such bitter pain
 Seems, at the mention of his name
 To quiver through her very frame?
 O, this was *worse* than folly! how
 Should thoughts like these disturb her
 now?

Herself dismissed him, one dark day,
 None else had sent her love away!

These thoughts were madness! he was not
 Her lover, surely she forgot
 That love in these cold, cynic days,
 Was fleeting as the very rays
 Of moonlight! even so will fade
 Her memory; yet she often made
 A hundred lame excuses why
 The burning tear-drops filled her eye—

Nay, sometimes when she strove to speak
 Hot tears would tremble down her cheek,
 And if they questioned, out of pride
 Her darkest sufferings she denied!
 For "Sometimes even the strong are ill,"
 "And she was only ailing!" Still
 Her cheek was day by day more pale,
 Her buoyant step began to fail.

Alas! whatever they inferred,
 From him, poor youth, they never heard,
 For Wilfred passed away, as though
 No one, he thought, would care to
 know,
 Either in early hours, or late,
 What might perchance become his fate—
 If one of glory, joy, or grief,
 To her could *nothing* be, in brief!

Yes! that a time so darkly shaded
 To him, had from her memory faded,
 And that she might not even care
 To hear his name: so wandered where
 His weary, listless steps might lead,
 Through valley or o'er grassy mead,
 In this, or in some foreign clime—
 His only prayer to hasten time!

So years passed by—long, weary years,
 Full of heart-breaking thoughts and
 fears,
 Full of unsettled hopes that wear
 The soul with their unspoken care;
 Full of the emptiness of life—
 An evil worse than war and strife,
 Far worse than fighting with disease,
 Far worse than even the blight—of ease!

One day to turn poor Edna's thought
 Upon another's woes, they brought
 At first to listless ears, the case
 Of one who, passing near the place,
 By some unruly beast was thrown
 Upon a wayside heap of stone:
 Pallid and motionless he lay—
 His eyes were closed, his lips like clay—

His very hands were blue and cold—
 Ah! what a fatal tale they told!
 Yet when he raised those heavy eyes
 How quick they were to recognise
 The eyes that looked into his own
 With tenderness they ne'er had shown
 In days that he had known before—
 Nor yet, alas! could show him more!

* * * * *

How long, how lovingly they gazed—
 "I am content to die!" he said
 Softly and low; they gently raised
 His shattered form, but—he was dead!

EYES OF THE PAST!

EYES, soft and sweet,
 Again re-open, full of tender sadness,
 And make, despite itself, the warm heart
 beat
 With love's own pensive, melancholy
 madness—

Eyes with a glow,
 A light that sometimes seems divinely
 fair,
 Unlike all other lights on earth we know,
 And yet whose memory almost brings
 despair!

Dark eyes that seem
 Like something not of earth, yet known
 before,
 Recalling some far-off mysterious dream,
 A vision nothing fully shall restore.

Eyes when they turn
 To other scenes their sweet and thrilling
 light,
 Still in my heart, and still for ever burn,
 Although their memory ends in darkest
 night!

For death can speak
 Even through the brightest things that
 earth can boast,
 And love's fair bloom shall leave the brow
 and cheek
 Even in the hours when they are prized
 the most!

AH! I REMEMBER.

AH! I remember—Oh, so long ago,
 I prayed her for a rose-bud as a boon—
 One nestling softly on her breast of snow,
 Nor dreamt its loveliness could pass so
 soon!

So limp! so withered! yet about it still
 Clings its sweet perfume; even as it
 lingers
 Something I feel! a strange, unearthly
 thrill,
 As though I felt the contact of her
 fingers!

Yet she, my lost one, is more wan than
 thou,
 Though memory paints her with no lines
 that die—
 But where is the sweet light of her fair
 brow—
 The pathos of her dark and tender eye?

Thy leaves are crumpled, ah! thy leaves
 are torn,
 Faded the freshness that was there
 before;
 Ah! never more upon my breast be worn,
 For I dare gaze upon thy death no more!

Too bitterly thou bringest to my thought
 A lesson full of bitterness and pain,
 A lesson life so often here hath taught—
 That hope is futile—love itself is vain!

THE TRESS OF HAIR;

OR,

AFTER LONG YEARS.

At last! I gather once again the rose
 That grew of old beside her mansion
 wall;
 At last! where the same gloomy ilex grows,
 And slender myrtle—stately now and tall.

'Twas here her sweet and loving lips I
 pressed,
 And here, with heart so weary and so
 sore,
 I held her, unresisting, to my breast,
 As though we never could be parted
 more!

'Twas here I robbed her of one fragrant tress,
Whose sombre hue her brow of snow had shaded,
And still, with tender reverence, I caress
That sweet love-token that has never faded.

Nay! it shall lie for ever on my heart,
Even if discoloured by my ceaseless tears;
Nor day shall ever dawn when I shall part
From that dear record of my happier years.

And when my life is over—when, heart-broken,
They lay me, too, beneath the same white stone,
In Heaven I claim my love by that sweet token,
And she shall be, for evermore, mine own!

LOST! LOST!

Lost! Lost!

Oh! shall I never hear her voice again—
Shall it be that for ever I may strain
Mine ear to catch that sweet and tender tone
Of love I knew was *for mine ear alone!*

Lost! Lost!

Can she not hear me as I kneel beside
That grave wherein her tender form they hide?
Doth she in such dead, stony silence lie,
She is not moved by my heart-breaking sigh?

Lost! Lost!

Shall she not rise in the sweet even-time,
Or when the first hours of the night shall chime,
To wander out with me through moonlit hours,
To gather with me summer's dewy flowers?

Lost! Lost!

And shall she never lay that head, so sweet,
Where she shall hear my heart's impassioned beat,
And feel that, lying there upon my breast,
She found tranquillity, and peace, and rest?

Lost! Lost!

There comes no answer through the dull,
still air—

No echo to the cry of my despair;
At last—oh! bitterer than death—I feel
Alone, in this wide world in which I kneel—

Lost!—Lost!

I CANNOT GRASP THE THOUGHT;

OR,

A LOST HAPPINESS.

I CANNOT grasp the thought of the long years

Yet possible, O life! after thy past!
Full it may be of still more bitter tears,
And each experience sadder than the last.

Yes! sadder through the weariness, not fleetness,

Of steps that tread the bare or weed-grown way,
The growth of the despair, the incompleteness

Of the one chosen purpose of our day.

Shall it be ever so, until, on earth,
The last hour of life's patient clock is tolled,

And voices—let them be of grief or mirth—
Like those who owned them once, are dead and cold!

Shall never be forgotten those strange days

When I looked forward, as into a mist,
Nor saw the eyes in which I loved to gaze,
Nor touched the tender lips that once I kissed?

No! I can image not a life so drear—

Its future blank as a sepulchral wall—
Or I should pray that death be ever near,
To come to my release when I should call!

FAREWELL!

FAREWELL! a last farewell!

Strange words they seem from lips of mine, and yet,

Ah! yet thou knowest, more than lips can tell,

To part from thee shall not be *to forget.*

Farewell! a last farewell!
 God knows the struggle hath been long
 and sore,
 Even as the tolling of a funeral bell,
 Whose dreary memory haunts us ever-
 more.

Farewell! a last farewell!
 Let not thy voice return to me again,
 Neither by streamlet, nor in shaded dell,
 Nor brought by music's low and mourn-
 ful strain.

Farewell! a last farewell!
 Come not to me—nor in the day, nor
 night;
 True as thou wert, alas! I know too well
 Thy memory now can only, ever, blight!

Farewell! a last farewell!
 Ah! pray that we are parted now for
 ever;
 Yet still I tremble as beneath a spell,
 Even while these dark and fateful links
 I sever!

REMEMBER ME!

REMEMBER me! in spite of blinding tears
 Thine eyes still seem the eyes I knew
 before—
 Remember me! still in a dream appears
 That face, that I may gaze upon no
 more!

Remember me! in calm, in joy, in pain,
 In sickness, or in health, *thou* ever art
 The one deathless impression of my brain,
 The one unfading memory of my heart.

Remember me! at home, or far abroad,
 Keep still the thought of one past vision
 dear,
 Even as in the sweet thrilling of some
 chord
 Of music, *thy* voice only can I hear!

Remember me! for thou can'st still
 enthal
 In all life's vexing fancies, thou—alone!
 Only beneath the dark, funereal pall,
 Shall cease to beat the heart that is
 thine own.

Remember me! and in the hours of
 night
 Let me return to thee again—again!
 Oh! let thy face with all its tender light
 Be with me, ever—ever to remain!

A MELANCHOLY RETROSPECT.

THAT which is gone can nothing now
 restore—
 The sweet pure strength of Faith is now
 no more—
 No more! yet what hath not its semblance
 cost!
 That vision only—now—for ever lost!
 Yet it was all my soul had held most
 dear,
 Most cherished, in my sad life's cold
 career;
 Call it a breath! but ah! how sweet a
 breath,
 That gone, hath left a desert—swept by
 death!

Why dost thou haunt me still with eyes
 that glow—
 Standing beside my couch? Dost thou not
 know
 I walked with madness in that hour of
 crime
 That hath my future blighted for all time?

And I, alas! was even as one blind,
 Through mists I knew not of—and as a
 wind
 Of blighting coldness o'er my young path
 swept,
 I neither stopped to shiver, nor yet wept!

Not till it passed I saw my fairest flowers—
 Those I had cherished as most pure and
 sweet—
 Those I had tended through so many
 hours—
 Lie broken and disordered at my feet.

Their beauty now for ever gone, their
 bloom,
 O God! is now but a dishonoured glory:
 Bury them deep — ah! deeper — in the
 tomb
 Press down the sod on their forgotten
 story!

DOUBT NEVER!

"For that way madness lies!"

DOUBT not the lover of thy youth—dream
not

Another's eyes to him shall be more
bright,

That on his fair fame is *one single blot*,
That aught he vows and swears may not
be right—

"For that way madness lies!"

Believe! believe! ah, better far believe,
Although it might prove but a lying tale!
The wrong shall rest with him who shall
deceive;

Seek thou not the wrong-doer to unveil—
"For that way madness lies!"

Hear not the ring of falsehood in his voice,
Dream not he feels not what his lips
may say,

That in some other's love he may rejoice,
Or in the pallid night or smiling day—
"For that way madness lies!"

Think not his heart rests by some foreign
hearth,
Where, it may be, some fairer eyes may
shine,

And that his steps shall ever take a path
Unknown by either steps or eyes of
thine—

"For that way madness lies!"

Believe! believe! if blindly, to the last!
Earth's lessons, though so sad, must
soon be past;

They shall be lightened by love's strong
belief:

To know the truth is sometimes more
than grief—

"For that way madness lies!"

HEART-BREAKING DOUBT.

"SHALT THOU FORGET ME?"

AH! yet shalt thou forget me? Are even
now

Thy dreams of some far sweeter, fairer
brow?

Dost thou, from either scorn, contempt, or
pride,

From all our past sweet visions turn aside?

That time to me so glowing and so dear,
Is it unworthy either sigh, or tear?
That peace of mind, so sadly, dearly
bought,
Shall it not win from thee *one* kindly
thought?

Ah, speak! if this be truth; that I may
learn

To leave to Heaven my darkened fate, and
turn

From all so madly loved, and loved in
vain,

Back to my lonely dreams of life again!

Yet must that past be even as a part
Of life itself, deep graven on my heart!
No long-drawn hours of anguish, nor shall
age,

Blot out the letters of that burning page!

And yet to thee, O my lost love, may
seem

This past the faintest shadow, a mere
dream!

A pallid vision of the moon, to fade,
To pass away—forgotten—in the shade!

Woe then for me, whose every hope and
fear

Can only follow still thy life's career;
Whose every thought, the fondest and the

last,
Will be with thee till life's sad dream is
past.

THE ANSWER.

"FORGET THEE? NEVER!"

FORGET thee? never! life-blood of my
heart!

Thy face is noble, thy pale brow is
clear;

I sleep not long, but, with a sudden start,
I waken up to find thee standing near.

As thou can'st not forget, so, neither I!

Not till the breath of life my lips hath
passed;

Not till the very hour when I shall die,
Faithful, remembering even to this last.

Forget thee? never! promise scarcely bold,
Since in the melancholy hours of night
I see thee standing—see thee as of old—
I look into thy loving eyes of light.

Forget thee? never! as the hours pass by
 Thou waitest sadly, as afraid to speak;
 I almost seem to hear thy tender sigh,
 I almost feel thy warm breath on my
 cheek.

Forget thee? never! life-blood of my
 heart!
 Thy face is noble, thy pale brow is
 clear;
 I sleep not long, but with a sudden start,
 I waken up to find thee standing near!

I KNOW THEE WELL.

LOVE! O sweet love, for ever fair and
 strong,
 Whose days shall still upon this earth be
 long;
 Although the look of thy pure, faithful
 eyes,
 To some — unhappy — shall but bring
 surprise—

Love! O true love, whose brow may never
 wear
 The melancholy lines of grim despair,
 Upon whose calm and holy brow, in vain
 The mean and vicious soul would fix its
 stain—

Love! O great love, the ever brave as
 sweet,
 Pacing the broad world with thy fearless
 feet;
 Whose lips to some a foreign language
 speak,
 Oft shown invincible, when thought but
 weak;—

Love! O immortal love! whose thrilling
 tone
 Shall thus, alas! be to some hearts un-
 known;
 Who without even comprehending, hear
 Those accents, full of tender rest, or
 fear!—

I know thee well, nor shall in life forget
 The fragrance of thy violet breath; and
 yet
 Thou art by some denied on earth to dwell,
 Although without thy presence earth were
 hell!

LOVE! IS NOT THAT THE NIGHTINGALE?

LOVE! is not that the nightingale that
 sings
 So sweetly in our quiet woods by night?
 Stirred by the silence of all earthly things,
 To pour forth its own pæan of delight!

Love! in this hour of pain and of distress,*
 That song is strange, half-mocking to
 the ear;
 Yes, strange to me that note of tenderness,
 So free from trouble and so brightly
 clear.

It sings when all the world is laid at rest,
 As though this earth were heaven, in its
 first sleep;
 As though by moans of grief no wit
 distressed,
 A realm where no one suffers, or shall
 weep!

As though the sheep that bleated in the
 pen,
 Were bleating from some rich and
 daisied plain;
 From realms untroubled by the jars of
 men,
 The clash of angry swords, the cries of
 pain.

'Tis well at times to listen, to believe
 In peace, in sweetness, in these calmer
 hours;
 'Tis wise at times to cease to fret, to
 grieve,
 So gain renewal of our higher powers.

A MYSTIC LOVER.

FAR o'er the waters as the stars arise,
 Is heard at times the echo of a song,
 Touching the ear as with a sweet surprise,
 As tenderly its notes are borne along.

Almost a voice from fairyland it seems,
 And with a scarcely earthly passion
 swells,
 As from a lover's land of glowing dreams,
 Soft as the peal of a magician's bells.

* A nightingale was heard singing through a summer night by one watching by a sad, sick bed.

One almost prays to listen as to sounds
That come from some far-off angelic
realm,
Not from this bitter world where grief
abounds,
And where the blows of death can over-
whelm.

Ah! happy lips from which such music
flows!

Ah! happy ears that catch their tender
thrill!

Ah! happy days that love, love only,
knows—

Sweet melodies that all too soon are
still!

Love! love! thy hours bring Paradise to
earth!

For which we pray, of which we weary
never;

Men oft know little of thy glorious worth
Till thou hast flown from their embrace
for ever.

LOVE! WHEN THE MOON IS RISING—

Love! when the moon is rising o'er the
sea,
And when the hours are silent—come to
me!

And I into thy tender eyes will gaze,
And we will dream sweet dreams of coming
days,
The days when we shall wander, hand in
hand,
Through all the light and darkness of the
land.

Love! when the moon is rising o'er the
sea,
And when the hours are silent—come to
me!

And words of mine shall never need to tell
The deathless faith that in mine heart
shall dwell,
That evermore a fearless light shall burn,
Nor in this life to dust and ashes turn.

Love! when the moon is rising o'er the
sea,
And when the hours are silent—come to
me!

Ah! sad it shall be when the hour to part
Lowers darkly o'er us—when thy tender
heart

Beats not to mine, and when I shall not
know

Where thou may'st be, or go where thou
may'st go!

Love! when the moon is rising o'er the
sea,
And when the hours are silent—come to
me!

And while that hour shall last we will
rejoice,

And I will listen to thy loving voice,
And hear its low, unfaltering tones repeat
*The tale that shall be ever true and
sweet!*

LOVE! WHEN THE DAY AND NIGHT ARE SOFTLY MEETING.

Love! when the day and night are softly
meeting,
And twilight shadows veil thy glowing
face,

When golden rays are from the earth
retreating,
When pensive stars steal out into their
place;

When the loud sounds of earth have
disappeared,

And I look into dark eyes wholly mine,
For the sweet glance that in the day I
feared—

Then, love, seems this—our earth—a
place divine!

What unto us the busy haunts of men,
What all the turmoil of this world below,
As shadows deepen softly in the glen,
And veil, on hill and plain, the sunset's
glow!

'Tis Heaven, not earth, that breathes
around us now,

'Tis Heaven, not earth, smiles in the
glowing skies;

Heaven shines upon thy pure and girlish
brow,

Heaven glistens in thy bright but dewy
eyes;

The world and all its thoughts have passed
awhile,

To realms that know not thy young,
tender face;

I only live in thy entrancing smile,
All else for me hath vanished into space!

"AH! NEVER PROPHET SHALL
FORETELL THAT DAY."

"Ah! never prophet shall foretell that day
When love shall simply be a poet's
theme,

Or show the blighting sadness of decay,
Or seem but a fanatic's shifty dream."

"No! Love shall be for ever strong and
deep,

Its very root is Immortality,
Its faithful promise love alone can keep—
It is a flower that may not, shall not,
die!"

"To Heaven it shall return—from Heaven
it came—

It hath no vulgar birth—untended
grave—

Love is a perfect, ever-glowing flame,
Fanned only by the faithful and the
brave!"

So, softly murmuring, through the dusk
went straying

Two youthful lovers, in the twilight
hours,

The light upon the dark trees faintly
playing,

The bright dew falling on the closing
flowers;

The moon shone through the mists that
crept above,

With something almost of a tender glow,
So lit their faces, full of peace and love—
That peace and love so rarely found
below!

THROUGH ALL—FAITHFUL!

THROUGH all the troubled windings of my
path,

Through all the storms descending from
above,

Through all the sorrows of the home and
hearth,

For ever faithful have I found thee,
love!

Through all the ghastly gloom of mortal
grief,

When spring's first early bloom was
overcast,

Yes! even to the autumn's fading leaf,
The cruel coldness of the winter's
blast!

E'en where death's pallid shadow grimly
fell,

And life seemed almost conquered for a
while,

And I looked up to thee to say farewell,
Still, love, I met thy sad yet hopeful
smile.

Thy constancy shall nothing ever shake,
Even pain beside thee oft will fear to
stay;

And all who live, O Love! for thy sweet
sake,

Shall find at last a calm and sheltered
bay.

So, through all troubled windings of my
path,

Through all the storms descending from
above,

Through all the sorrows of the home and
hearth,

For ever faithful have I found thee,
love!

LOVE! LOVE! SWEET LOVE!

LOVE! love! sweet love!

Fear not the storms that on thy path
may beat;

They are of earth, they come not from
above,

Let them disorder not thy steadfast
feet.

Let not that roar
Of thunder, O sweet love, distress thine
ear!
Remember the bright days that went
before,
And scorn to hear of tumult, doubt, and
fear.

Amidst the leaves,
The sad leaves, falling on thy stormy
path,
Thou hearest oft the stealthy tread of
thieves,
Who seek the fairest treasures of thy
hearth.

Still faint thou not!
Thou hast a strength of which they
nothing dream,
Thou can'st defy the plotter, and the plot,
And smile to see their weapons' sudden
gleam!

Go on! nor fear
That any dagger reach thy placid
breast—
Thy vision of the heaven of love is clear,
Nor shall the traitor's step disturb thy
rest!

SHE HID HER FACE.

SHE hid her face upon his faithful
breast—
For he was all on earth she held most
dear;
Her heart beat wildly with a strange
unrest,
Something akin to, yet which was not
fear!

"That Heaven who gave us this true
love," she sighed,
"Shall *He* divide us in this world
below?
Shalt thou be ever taken from my side;
Oh! I could fathom never such strange
woe!"

"Some say that love, is intensified by fear,
It may be so—I know but this—if I
Were ever torn from one so deeply dear
I should not here remain—except to
die!"

"How should I care to breathe when the
one flower
Is gone—the only one I deem so sweet;
What could I wait for, save for that dear
hour
When I might go, the lost and loved to
meet!"

' Ah, yes! how should I live when thou
had'st passed
Into the mystery of the Unknown Day?
Save for the hour to cry—'At last! at
last!'
The call of death has come for which I
pray!"

PATIENT LOVE.

LOVE! love! my heart is with thee;
whereso'er
Thy footsteps wander, there my thoughts
shall be!
Think of me, love, with hope, not with
despair—
Think of me, love, as ever one with thee.

For there is no division of our souls,
Mine in thy keeping rests where'er thou
art;
No matter what strange sea between us
rolls,
Not in our spirits shall we be apart.

In the calm sunlight, in the busy day,
By neither laughter, nor reproaches
moved,
I go in silence on my lonely way,
My heart far off with thee—with my
beloved.

In the still night, while others calmly rest,
To Heaven for thee all earnestly I cry,
That yet our love and patience may be
blessed,
And this sad past recalled but with a
sigh.

I look up still to Hope's sweet, patient
star,
And pray it also cheers thine unknown
lot;
For hope yet dwells with me, though thou
art far
Away, in scenes where I may follow not.

ONCE MORE ALONE WITH THEE

ONCE more alone with thee, the world
forgetting,

With all its mean ambitions laid at rest—
No longer sorrowful, no longer fretting,
No longer travel-stained, weak, or
distressed.

Once more alone with thee—the spiteful
word,

The unreal smile, the hypocritic tear,
The burning fires by hands of malice
stirred,

The false interpretation, blighting
sneer—

All—all forgotten here! our weary eyes
Neither upon the mean, nor cruel, are
fixed;

We look up calmly to the placid skies,
Our thoughts with fevered fancies all
unmixed.

Ah! if the hours are fleeting that are
calm—

Ah! if we find them few as they are
dear—

Ah! if the time is short that carries balm—
The skies but rare that we shall count as
clear—

Yet is it well! we may not here remain
One hour beyond the time allotted man;
'Tis better he should know his vision vain
Than mourn, heart-broken, some frus-
trated plan:

For one has known, alas! too sadly known,
Of those that shape too much their
future years—

As though the future *lay with them alone*—
To see all end in failure, grief, and
tears.

FOR HER.

HE cared not for the passing praise of
men,

Nor strained he after any worldly prize—
Or, at the most, he sought them only when
They brought a passing smile to her soft
eyes.

No one had power his steady heart to
move,
His open brow o'ercloud, his gladness
dim,—

No one, save her, whose glance of restful
love,

Or sigh of pain was all the world to
him.

Nor ever thrilled he at another's voice,
Although it might be sweet and pure of
tone—

No lips to him were ever sweet and choice,
Except the lips of one—of one alone.

He loved her more than all his many
years

Of triumph—more than all his wealth,
or pride—

For her were all his hopes and all his
fears,

The world without was empty, dull, and
wide.

Nor did he care for life itself, he said,
Except she all his thoughts and joys
could share—

And from the bitter hour when she lay
dead,

Earth lost to him its all of bright and
fair!

FOR HIM.

EARTH held for her no place and life no
plan

Nor path but one, and one for ever
sweet—

The world no joy, unlinked from one brave
man,

One who could never either lie or cheat.

One for a woman's calm and perfect trust,
One of an ever-loving, faithful breast—

And in this world of bitter greed and lust
He was her steady comfort, and her rest.

And when—one hour of bitterness—she
waited

The passing heavy darkness of her days,
She saw *his* nobler courage never failed,
Like some of earth who trod in prouder
ways.

To him, indeed, the heavy storm was
nought

But trial of his higher, loftier powers—
The very strengthening of ennobling
thought,

The very outcome of his sadder hours.

For ever wise of word and prompt of deed,
For ever firm of hand and cool of
breath—

Men saw his was a strong reliant creed,
A faith that would not even swerve in
death!

TO MY LOVE.

So thou wilt guide me through life's
puzzling maze,

To help my footsteps whereso'er I go—
So thou art with me through life's stormy
days,

I am content—more than content, I
know!

Yea! for all trial is lightened when thy
hand

Holds fast to mine through all earth's
darkest skies—

I fear not when the gloom o'erspreads the
land

So I see courage in thy calm, brave eyes.

I start not at the thunder's angry roar,
Nor at the rushing stream, the pelting
storm—

The rough waves dashing on the neigh-
bouring shore—

While thy true hand-clasp still is firm
and warm.

And while *thy* voice is loving, calm, and
clear—

That dearest voice that I so long have
known—

No, love! I know not cowardice, nor fear,
My heart beats steadily even as thine
own.

No, love! scarcely from vanity, or pride,
Or fear lest the clear heavens be over-
cast,

I pray to be for ever by thy side,
Helped by thy strength unto the very
last.

LOVE! BE THOU EVER NEAR ME!

LOVE! be thou ever near me—let thy
hand

Support me through the hours of clouded
night—

Support me through the shadows of the
land—

Support me where there is despair or
blight.

Love! be thou ever near me—let me feel
Thy help my courage, and *thy* praise
my pride—

Oh, let me, when my brain shall faint
and reel,

Know thou art my support and by my
side.

Love! be thou ever near me—eyes shall
speak

No word of dark despair while thou art
mine—

Tears then shall dry upon the whitened
cheek,
Beyond the sunset silver stars shall shine.

Love! be thou ever near me—thou can'st
see

Through the dark shadows that appal my
sight—

Thou see'st visions unrevealed to me,
The dawn that lies behind the heavy
night!

WE TWO SAT SILENT.

WE two sat silent, with the pine-tree
boughs

Above us, shading from the moon's
bright beams—

There was, we felt, no need of spoken
vows,

Our souls were wandering in sweet,
tender dreams.

We two sat silent; neither uttered word,
Only at times was heard a faint, soft
sigh—

Those trees above us softly bent and
stirred,

Now showing and now hiding the calm
sky.

We two sat silent; yet we knew the beat
Of our own hearts resounded each to
each,
That told a tale more thrilling and more
sweet
Than could have e'er been told by
human speech.

We two sat silent; but his firm hand
pressed
Mine own, and seemed to touch my very
heart—
Around us seemed a world of perfect rest,
A falling leaf had made a listener start.

We two sat silent as the hours went by,
With something in them of no earthly
thrill,
The stars changed slowly on the broad-
arched sky,
And the full moon sank down behind the
hill.

WHAT IS THE WORLD'S CONTEMPT TO ME, O LOVE!

WHAT is the world's contempt to me, O
love,
So thou art ever true and ever near—
What are the heavy storms that break
above,
So that thine eyes, as now, are calm and
clear?

Oh! I would rather in a desert dwell
With thee, than share another's brilliant
throne;—
Far rather share with thee the poorest cell
Than live in plenty, peace, and praise—
alone!

Yea! rather eat with thee the poorest
crust,
Drinking the clear, cool water of the
spring,
So that thine eyes were full of love and
trust,
Thy dear words free from grief or
anger's sting!

Man's darkest, most injurious, worst of
foes
Are neither thirst nor pain, however
great,

Nor yet disease's pangs; but they are
those
Who hunt his life with bitterest of hate!

Those not *without* thy "circle," but
within!
Yes! those who under friendship's seem-
ing guise
Would stab thy heart, regardless of the
sin,
Whose malice may be veiled, *but never
dies!*

THOU ART MINE OWN.

THOU art mine own—for evermore mine
own!
Thy soul knit to my soul, both now and
ever—
And thou shalt never, therefore, hear me
moan
That heaven may faithful be—but man
is—never!

Thou art mine own, yes! mine and only
mine—
Unchanged thine image always in mine
eyes!
Ah, love, there might be fewer to repine
If more like thee dwelt under earthly
skies.

This never swerving of our heart's best
love,
This faithfulness, enduring to the end,
Is as a lesson taught us from above,
And all else mortal feelings shall
transcend.

Thou art mine own: yes! thou shalt never
change.
Neither for weeping, nor for mocking
laughter;
If there be those that think such faith
but strange,
*Then woe for them, poor souls—now
and hereafter.*

Thou art mine own: we here on earth
may dwell
By Heaven's permission faithful to life's
core—
Between us never mention of farewell,
For I am thine, thine own, for ever-
more!

LOVE IN ADVERSITY.

SWEET art thou in adversity, O love!

Thy step is gentle, and thy hand is cool;
Thou hast the tender softness of a dove,
Thou hast the calmness of a woodland pool.

Sweet art thou in adversity—the gleam
Of stedfastness is in thy glowing eyes;
Thou comest to me as an angel's dream,
Thou art to me a flower that never dies.

Sweet art thou in adversity—thy touch
Hath something in it that can ever
calm,
And when thou speakest low thy tone is
such,
It falleth on my wounded soul as balm!

Sweet art thou in adversity—till then
Thy love but seemed the love of many
stories,
Thy faithfulness but that of other men!
But charged, in that dark hour, with
newer glories!

Sweet art thou in adversity, *I know!*
And soothing even in thy gentle sighs;
And if my heart is faint, my courage low,
Thou comest as with light from holier
skies!

HAUNTED.

THOU comest to me in the mocking night,
Thy calm, cold eyes look steadily in
mine;

I see thee standing in the chequered light,
The stars through thy long, bony fingers
shine.

Thou comest to me in the hour of rest,
Thy form on grey, thin vapour seems
to float;

I see a heart's-ease withered on thy breast,
I seem to hear thy voice's weary note.

Thou bringest a remembrance full of
gloom,

An evil breath upon a polished glass;
Thy shadow shall fall darkly on my tomb—
A shadow through which all will fear to
pass.

Oh! is it not enough that I may never
Join in this life in songs of peace and
mirth,

But one dark memory shall follow ever
Each hour that I may pass upon this
earth?

And still thou comest in the mocking night,
Thy calm, cold eyes look steadily in
mine;

I see thee standing in the chequered light,
The stars through thy long, bony fingers
shine!

IT IS SWEET IN THE QUIET
WOODS.

It is sweet in the quiet woods with thee
to dream,

As the bats in the twilight softly flit
about;

To hear no sound more loud than a mur-
muring stream,
Forgetting the busy world that lies
without.

It is sweet to rest in some warm and calm
retreat,

And hear, from afar, the waggoner's
mellowed song,

As the beech tree's whispering boughs
above us meet,

And the shades grow deep, and the
shades grow dense and long—

And the hum of the beetle passes by the
ear,

And we see the glow of a July sun's
descent,

And the flow of trickling waters, sounding
near,

Under the bulrushes above them bent.

When the cattle's evening low no more is
heard,

And we watch the sparkling sheen of
the falling dew,

And only the sweet bluebells at times seem
stirred,

And the stars steal slowly out in the
dusky blue—

Ah! love! it is sweet beneath the darken-
ing skies,

So full of the promise of the life above,
To gaze in the depth of thy softly-speaking
eyes,

And hear but of two sweet words from
thee—"My love!"

TENDERLY LOW.

TENDERLY low is the fir tree's pensive
sigh,

Tenderly low is the voice of my love
to me,

Tenderly low hums the beetle swinging by,
Tenderly low the wind goes down on
the sea.

Oh! there are times that seem, for earth,
too fair,

There are buds that blossom that only
smell too sweet,

And we waken up to the murmur of
earth's despair,

To the thought of the pallid dead
beneath our feet.

And the voices, sounding once so sweet
and clear,

Have something sad, as the ring of a
parting knell,

And fall with another echo upon the ear—
An echo, alas! we know, and know too
well.

Tenderly low the tones once more
resounded,

And we look up softly into the evening
skies,

By the echoes often of long-past years
surrounded,

As the light fades slowly and slowly from
our eyes.

Tenderly low is life's sweet evensong,

That follows us oft to the shadow of the
tomb,

And still through the growing dusk we
listen long,

Till it dies with love and life in the
fallen gloom.

MY LOVE!

ON thy dear face

A world of tenderness and pathos lies—
Thy form is full of calm and gentle grace—
A heaven of love is in thy tender eyes.

In each sweet tone

Of thy low voice is peace, and calm, and
rest—

I recognise a something all thine own,
No other voice that I have heard
possessed.

All thy cool hand

Hath strength to do is well and wisely
done—

In no way with that hard touch of com-
mand,

That hath obedience only ever won.

The gentle tread

Of thy true feet is never coarsely strong—

No bitter words thy dear lips ever said,
Nor have they uttered plaints of fancied
wrong.

Thou art not one

To bring foul troubles to the household
hearth,

The coarser races of this life to run,
Nor to bring discord on thine earthly
path.

BELIEVE NOT THOSE.

BELIEVE not those who say that love is
weak—

Believe not those who tell thee love can
die—

Believe not those who warn thee love may
speak

A word of falseness, or can feign a sigh.

Love, faithful love, the love that true
hearts know,

Is not of yesterday, nor of to-morrow:

Deny it not! I swear that this is so!

Thou art an unbeliever to thy sorrow!

Love is immutable, as is this earth,

As faithful as the sun is to the sky;

Love is of Heaven, eternal from its
birth—

Love may be sorely stricken, yet not
die.

O unbeliever, it is to thy loss

To mock at love as conquered here by
time—

Under the very shadow of the cross

Love hath been faithful, nay, hath been
sublime!

Love! thou alone art all in all—even thou!
 If ever sheltered by thy glowing side
 Grief shall not stain the calm upon my
 brow,
 And death himself be stripped of all
 his pride!

LOVE THAT IS EVER!

SWEET is the love that trouble cannot
 blight,
 The love that gilds the darkness of our
 night;
 Sweet is the love that lasteth to the end,
 The love for always the undying friend.

Sweet art thou, love, when leaves of
 autumn fall,
 Sweet art thou when the winter storms
 appal,
 Sweet art thou, watching by the dying bed,
 With thy low tender voice and soothing
 tread—

O love! that laughs to hear the raging
 storm,
 O love! that in the bleakest days is warm,
 That shivers not to see the lightning's
 flash,
 That trembles not to hear the thunder's
 crash—

O love! true love, immutable, unchanged,
 That neither pain nor insult hath
 estranged,
 That shudders not to meet the blows of
 fate—
 Love ever true, in early hours or late—

Ah! if I lose thee in mine home below,
 And seem to pass from thy sweet side; I
 know
 That I shall greet thee in a holier sphere,
 Where death is not, where thou shalt
 "cast out fear!"

THE HOUR OF DREAMS.

LOVE! it is pleasant by thy side to sit
 At sunset's calm and softly dreamy hour,
 What time the dusky bats begin to flit
 From the dark pine woods to the ivied
 tower.

Love! it is sweet to dream, if but awhile
 This world of ours is but a world of
 peace,
 On which the moon looks down with tender
 smile,
 While the last echoes of rude labour
 cease.

Love! it is yet more sweet to feel the press
 Of thy soft glowing lips, that cling to
 mine—
 To tremble at the world of tenderness
 That in thine eyes dark depths of passion
 shine.

Love! it is sweet to hold thy warm, firm
 hand,
 As twilight's shadows grow more dense
 and deep,
 And veil the peaceful forests of the land,
 As scented meadow flowers are laid
 asleep.

Still, sweeter, oh! my love, forgetting all,
 To lay my head upon thy faithful breast,
 As evening deepens to a sombre pall,
 And all the world of toil is lulled to
 rest.

AH, LOVE! THROUGH THE SWEET-SCENTED WOODS TO WANDER.

AH, love! through the sweet-scented woods
 to wander,
 While through the pine boughs the
 bright planets shine,
 To hear thy pleading voice grow fond and
 fonder—
 Ah, love! this is divine!

Ah, love! to hear the song of nightingale*
 Come from its bower of twisting
 eglantine,
 The bleat of sheep that wander in the
 vale—
 Ah, love! this is divine!

Ah, love! to scent the fragrant evening
 flowers,
 The honeysuckle arms that lightly
 twine—

* There was the nest of a nightingale at Odsey almost entirely concealed by eglantine.

Though knowing ours are yet but earthly
bowers—

Ah, love! this is divine!

Ah, love! to see the moon steal softly up,
And glimmer through the dark boughs
of the pine,

And gem the dew-drops on the blue-bell's
cup,

Ah, love! this is divine!

Ah, love! to need no words the tale to
tell

Of faith, to know thy every thought is
mine,

To bid, awhile, the busy world farewell—
Ah, love! this is divine!

HOURS OF HAPPY DREAMING.

BRIGHT flowers grew thickly round their
restful feet,

Flowers of the woodlands, delicate and
sweet;

Glad birds were singing songs of joy and
love

In the green chestnut boughs that waved
above.

And dark eyes, eyes that shone with tender
light,

Looked into others, fair as stars of night!

That said a thousand things no lips could
say,

Even in those tender hours of parting
day.

Her gentle head sank lower, to the rest
Most sweet of all, upon her lover's
breast,

All, in the *bliss of dreaming*, they forgot,
Though word of passion either uttered
not.

Love spoke in every sigh, in every breath,
Love that could fear no change, nor
thought of death;

Softly the forest leaves at times were
stirred,

Softly the nightingale's clear notes were
heard.

So dreamt they, as the hours went softly
by,

And Eve's mild planet stole into the sky;

So dreamt they, till amongst the mosses
dank

And soft, the glow-worms came out on the
bank.

Ere long the last faint flush of sunset
paled,

Ere long the meadow lands with mists were
veiled,

Ere long the graceful ferns their leaves
had furled,

And then they came back slowly to the
world!

LOVE, TILL ETERNITY.

LOVE! it were strange

To pass a life beneath earth's stormy
sky,

Nor know what power thy breath shall
have to change

All things that meet the gaze of thy
bright eye!

Love! it were sad

To live this life untouched by thy sweet
light;

Far would I rather be "divinely mad"

Than find myself in that unhappy
plight!

Yet there are those

Whose ears hear not thy voice's tender
tone,

Whose hearts have felt not thy mysterious
woes,

Who of thy power and strength have
never known.

Love! it were death

Once knowing thee to lose thee from my
side;

If I were ever robbed of thy sweet
breath

That moment would I pray that I had
died!

Far rather I,

Conscious that life were lost, bereft of
thee,

In thy embrace once held would therein
die—

Then, love, be thine to all eternity!

YES! GIVE ME THY TRUE HAND.

Yes! give me, love, thy hand, and let us
 stray
 Where the cool shades of autumn
 evening meet;
 And while the skies are placid, warm, and
 gray,
 Dream— if a moment only—life is
 sweet!

Thou lov'st me ever, and I am content
 With roughest paths if thou art by my
 side;
 Thou hast a strength of courage never
 bent—
 Thou art sustained by faith and not by
 pride.

Thy footsteps steadily their strong way
 take,
 And if I sometimes follow with tired
 eyes,
 Yet will I bear all troubles for thy sake,
 And know thou art not only true but
 wise.

Yes! give me, love, thy hand, so strong,
 so firm;
 It will uphold me still, defying fate:
 Weak I may be, and yet *thy* love may earn
 An entrance still at the Eternal Gate!

LOVE AND TRUST.

I LOVE thee! for thy voice hath to mine
 ear
 A something never other voice pos-
 sessed—
 And I am conscious, love, when thou art
 near,
 That I am in a haven of sweet rest.

I love thee—for in all thou dost there
 seems
 A strength unusual, something of strange
 powers—
 And in each glance of thy deep eyes there
 gleams
 The light as of a purer world than ours.
 I love thee—for all things touched by thy
 fingers
 Have a sweet, subtle perfume, all their
 own—

And in each accent of thy voice there
 lingers
 A pathos, to all other sounds unknown!

I love thee—knowing that thy truthful
 brow
 Is strong, is steadfast, as when first
 we met—
 I love thee, and shall ever love as now—
 Thou art not one love *could*, indeed,
 forget!

I love thee, and I rest upon thy heart,
 And know it will be faithful to its trust,
 Until the hour when we from earth depart,
 And leave its life behind us—in the
 dust!

I WANDERED OUT.

I WANDERED out in the soft summer
 hours—
 My love and I: we wandered, hand in
 hand,
 While twilight's veil fell softly o'er earth's
 bowers,
 And white, soft mists crept gently o'er
 the land.

He drew my head down softly to his
 breast,
 Under the weeping ash-tree's drooping
 bough—
 The world without seemed peaceful and
 at rest,
 Neither of feud nor sorrow thought we
 now.

Is this the same world where I breathed
 before—
 With the same sullen night and loud-
 voiced day?
 Have the proud hopes by which I set such
 store
 Now vanished and for ever passed
 away?

Have I to a far sweeter sphere been
 moved—
 Borne by swift angel-wings through
 silent space?
 Are all the tender dreams I have so loved
 Now realised—with fullest joy and
 grace?

It is but dreamland—see, the night is falling!

The darkness cometh even as before;
The nightingales, that only now were calling
So softly to each other, sing no more!

The bonds that bind us in this life are strong,
'Tis not a grove for nightingale, or rose—
The hours for joy are brief, for sorrow long,
Our work is hard, uncertain our repose!

THE LANGUAGE OF THE FINGERS.

Ah! let me hold thy warm and tender hand
In evening's pensive hour, for, as I hold,
By even its tremor I can understand
Far more than ever thy dear lips have told!

Yes, by those trembling fingers, love, I know
What thou hast never dared in words to say—
They tell me, dearest, by their deepening glow,
Of that sweet sympathy for which I pray.

Yes! "swimming eyes" have sometimes been misread,
And even the sudden glow upon the cheek,
And only brokenly thy lips have said
That tale of old I fain would have them speak!

A thousand things may those dear fingers tell,
Thy heart may even unwittingly betray;

Yes! often warmer far in their farewell
Than aught the sad and faltering lips can say.

So let me hold thy hand, sweet love, in mine—
Mine, also, saith what thou had'st known before—

How all my heart, my strongest soul, are thine,
Full of undying strength, for evermore.

DEAREST! TO WANDER OUT.

DEAREST! to wander out at twilight's hour—
To see the light of stars on thy pale face—
To linger long in some green, tangled bower—
In some sweet-scented, world-forgotten place—

So lost in thought, so wrapt in pensive dreams,
Save when called back by some far village life—
We muse beneath the ever calm moon-beams
Untroubled by the shadows of this life—

Hearing no sound, except the throbbing beat
Of our own hearts, so mystically loud,
Having no thought except that life is sweet,
And that *our* skies have neither chill nor cloud—

Listing the soft wind sighing through the trees,
Doubting of turmoil, trouble, grief and fear—

Ah! were earth only filled with sounds like these!
Ah! were Heaven ever smiling thus—and clear!

'Tis well to feel that life is not all grief,
But hath its golden hours of priceless worth—

And moments exquisite, if they are brief,
That seem to bring, awhile, fair Heaven to earth!

LOVE, IT IS DARK!

LOVE, it is dark! where is thy tender hand?

Love, though I falter yet uphold me still,

To fear no heavy shadows in the land,
Nor of the sky, its cold and deadly chill!

Oh, I can see not for the heavy mist
Of tears that seem to load the very air!
Forgive me if the lips that thou hast
kissed

Speak now but words of terror and
despair!

Even love, the faithful, knows one gloomy
hour,

Both for the lover, husband, child and
mother—

O'er love itself there reigns one deadly
power,

The power of death, beloved one, if no
other.

Sweet! I believe not even in death's decay
So far as love is touched; its soul shall
live

Only to blossom in a brighter way—

Only a richer, deeper joy to give.

Love! death alone can send me from thy
side—

Nor grief, nor poverty our ties can
sever—

Thou, and thou only, art mine earthly
pride,

Thou, and thou only, art my rest for
ever.

I COME FOR HOPE AND COMFORT TO THY SIDE!

Love! O my love! my heart is in thy
keeping—

I come for peace and comfort to thy
breast—

For in thy heart no treachery lies sleep-
ing—

For in thine eyes are ever peace and
rest.

Love! O my love! the calm of summer
skies,

When the hot sun is veiled by an
eclipse,

Is not so calm as are thy faithful eyes—
Is not so sweet as are thy tender lips.

Love! O my love! I hear the sobs and
moans

Of coming tempests in the chilly air—

Yet there is comfort in thy placid tones,
Nor fear, complaint, nor restlessness is
there.

Love! O my love! my feet are torn and
bleeding,

For I have traversed a long, stony way,
And yet the distance ever seems receding
Into the shadows of a far-off day.

Love! O my love! my heart is sore and
sad,

Wounded in hope and broken in its
pride—

In drear and sober mourning am I clad—
I come for hope and comfort to thy
side!

UNFORGOTTEN.

I THINK of thee through the soft summer
night,

And seem to see again thine eyes of love,
Thy face, so full of strange, mysterious
light,

Thy brow on which the stars shine from
above.—

I think of thee when I, alas! am far
From all that might again our love
recall—

I hear thy voice beyond the roar of war,
Returning in sweet music's rise and fall.

I think of thee in the hot, fretful crowd,
And in the busy city's pressing throng,
And through all things most turbulent and
loud,

Thy voice still pierces, clear, though
never strong.

But most I think of thee when I am sad,
And when in weariness I pray for
death—

Thy form in tender robes of memory
clad—

Thy dear lips parted by thy fragrant
breath.

Oh! many weary suns arise and set—
Thy keepsake flowers and gifts are dry,
or rotten—

Thy very grave is far away, and yet
*There is no hour in which thou art
forgotten.*

AH, EVEN WHEN THOU ART SO
FAR AWAY.

AH! even when thou art so far away,
I cannot think that thou can'st never
hear

My voice, when for thy welfare, love, I
pray,
Either with hope or with heart-breaking
fear.

I grieve not simply that we are apart—
That I am here and thou so far away—
My soul is with thee whereso'er thou art,
Or in the gloomy night or weary day.

A faint, sweet voice seems breathing on
the air,
Full of the pathos that so well I know—
It keeps from me the blankness of despair,
And bids the hopeless hours more swiftly
go.

Yes! through all the waking hours of day
I hear
That voice whose tones with such deep
love are fraught—
It brings to me no sense of pain, or fear,
Only the longing that of old it brought.

Therefore, O love! mine anguish still is
strong,
As through the tired hours pace my
weary feet—
Still more if as the shades of eve grow
long,
I hear no more that voice, so faint and
sweet.

Alas! I know not why, but still I fear
Its sound may never reach that further
home
That may be mine, yet never mine while
here,
And where no shadows of the unblessed
come!

TO THE LAST.

STAND thou beside me, O my own
beloved,
And let me lay my head upon thine
arm—
So shall I, in that peace, hear, all un-
moved,
Dark sorrow's sob and pain's more fierce
alarm.

And let me feel the beating of thy heart,
So constant, even in a life like this—
Oh! let me feel, mine own, ere I depart,
The last warmth of thy ever faithful
kiss!

So will my gaze pierce even the despair
That makes of earth a huge perpetual
tomb,
And know a world more exquisitely fair,
Beyond our shadows and unholy gloom.

For o'er the paths of life are ever falling
The bitter darkness of our human days,
Darkness the saddest and the most
appalling,
In that man shall not lift it from his
ways.

Oh, stay with me, sweet, to the very
end—
Touch all things mine with love's eternal
kiss,
So on mine earthly path there shall
descend
The glory of a brighter world than this!

I KNOW THEE, LOVE.

I KNOW thee, love! thou fain would'st
have me live,
Despite enfeebled hope and worn out
powers—
I know thee, love! I know that thou
would'st give
Thy years of life, if they could save me
hours!

Nay! if the briefest pleasure it could
bring,
For thy dear sake I yet would suffer
longer—
Yet fain would I, then, pray one other
thing—
That, having life, to feel that life were
stronger.

I hear thee, love! yet were it ill for thee—
If the desire to live even now were
mine—
For some things, love, it were not well
should be,
Even at the prayer of love—of love like
thine.

To live to see thy sorrow—knowing pain
Shall sometimes bring the hot tears to
mine eyes—

To strive those pains to lessen, but in vain—
Ah! love—such life were madness—
death more wise!

Think of me, dearest, when there are no
tears—

None by intolerable cares oppressed!
Think of me, dearest, through the coming
years,

As one at peace at last—at last at rest!

LOVE, THOU ART REST!

LOVE, thou art rest! to thee I bring my
sorrow,

Upon thy breast my bitter tears I shed;
Thou biddest me look forward to the
morrow,

To lift to heaven my bowed despairing
head—

Love, thou art rest! when worn with
weary sobs,

I pray thy help—nor supplicate I long;
I bring to thee the weary heart that
throbs

With cruel injustice, or with biting
wrong.

Love, thou art rest! thy calm eyes smile
to mine,

Unspoiled by bitterness, undimmed by
fears,

And in thy gaze both help and comfort
shine,

So to rebuke my swiftly falling tears.

Love, thou art rest! and one by one I
hush

The wailing sobs and moans of my
despair,

And down beneath my feet my sorrows
crush,

Until once more life's flowers spring
fresh and fair.

Love, thou art rest! thine arms are ever
wide

And open, round my fainting form to
close:

Love, let me rest for ever by thy side,
Thou art my haven—there I find repose.

TO —.

No! thine is not the love of which *some*
write,

That seeketh but its own mean, passing
pleasure—

A love that only lasts while eyes are
bright—

A love strong hearts would scorn to have
and treasure.

Not love that only feeds on "perfect lips,"
Or on the "whiteness" of a "woman's
skin,"*

A love the next young beauty might
eclipse,

A love the next fair-seeming light might
win—

Thou shalt not be to me that *vulgar*
thing

That hath been painted sometimes
with coarse brush,

Neither a gaudy fly with shining wing,
Nor *anything* that makes a pure cheek
blush.

None can, I know, describe its perfect
bliss,

At least it needs a brighter pen than
mine,

But whatsoever Love is—it is *not this*—
A thing of fevered glow — of tawdry
shine.

No! rather something glorious to the last,
That breathes its spirit in our dying
breath;

Something whose strength hath never been
surpassed,

Whose beauty and whose power endure
till death!

SWEETER AND DEARER.

SWEETER and dearer as the days go by,
Thy love is one nor pain nor age shall
alter;

Love lights the depths of thy deep, tender
eye,

Love that will neither chill, nor change,
nor falter.

* Phrases in the works of some poets.

Strong—faith hath promised—to the latest
hours
Of earthly life; if faint with sorrow's
blows

Upspringing with renewal of its powers,
So as to calmly front its deadliest foes.

Strong to the last! for I fear not to claim
For thee a faith and trust but rarely
shown—

Not for *my* merits, nor for *thy* good name,
But that all meanness is to thee un-
known.

Strong to the last! no matter for the
storm

The angry clouds that o'er thy sky
might roll,
If friends are cold, if enemies are warm,
It shall not change thee, love, in heart
or soul.

Strong to the last! nor boastful, vain, nor
loud,

Fearing no chill, nor yet misfortune's
blast,
Nor in thine own conceit and actions
proud,
Yea, only simply *faithful* to the last!

IMMUTABLE.

THY lips, O my beloved, are but mine—
Thine eyes of love for me alone shall
shine;

Under the light, O love, of thy fair sky
I pray thee let me slumber when I die!

The vulgar hate of others I can bear,
They bring to me no thought of earth's
despair;

I only smile with calm disdain, that they
*Should deem they cast one shadow on my
way.*

I clasp thee closer, firmer, to my breast,
The joys of thine I have so long
possessed,

They are of worlds that they shall enter
not—

Of worlds undreamt of in their sordid lot.

The toil of the malicious is but waste;
No doubt, no fear hath yet *thy* trust
disgraced;

There lives no human brain that hath fore-
told

The hour in which thy love shall e'er be
cold!

The evil lines they trace on our life's
page

Shall wait not even for the touch of age;
They are as letters writ on shifting sand,
That faith obliterates with scornful hand.

LOVE!

ACROSS THE WAVES THAT IN THE SUNSET GLISTEN.

ACROSS the waves that in the sunset
glisten

There comes the sweet sound of a
lover's lay,
And as a world-worn pilgrim stands to
listen
Softly the echoes swell—then die away.

And something of a never-weary love
Seems in the sweetness of its passing
breath,

Unfailing as the light that shines above,
By faithlessness untouched, nor claimed by
death!

Oh, slowly as they sink into the soul,
Each passing tender—each soft, long-
drawn note

Seems as of worlds where stars eternal
roll,

Where forms ethereal through the fair
heavens float.

Love! thou wert taught in Heaven, from
Heaven descended,

And with eternity thy throne wilt share;
If something earthly with thy glow is
blended

It shall not be thy fault, but thy
despair.

Oh! when I leave these chequered plains
below,

Take me, I pray thee, to be *one of
thine—*

Thou art, O Love, immortal! and I
know

Unchanging light upon thy brow shall
shine!

THE CAVERN BY THE SEA;

AND OTHER SEA SONGS AND TRADITIONS.

" Watchman, will the night soon pass? "

INTRODUCTION.—BY THE LONE SEA-SHORE.

WITH faint and faltering tread,
I keep the solemn watches of the night—
With heart of sorrow and with drooping
head,
Beneath the pale starlight.

Upon the lonely beach,
Where wars of Elements shall never
cease,
I muse upon the world beyond our reach,
Where there is Rest—and Peace!

O'er yonder fretful deep
The light of countless planets hath been
shed—
Their tragic legends still the billows keep,
Nor whisper of the Dead!

They tell not to our ears
A tale of passing time or coming doom—
The mysteries of a million rolling years
Lie silent in *that* tomb!

So—on the smooth sea sands—
Beneath the angry storms of earthly
skies—
We lift to Heaven our mute and helpless
hands,
Our sad and blinded eyes.

O sea of unknown ages!
Thy secrets never shall be here
revealed—
So shall the records of thy myriad pages
Be as a book unsealed!

O never-sleeping waves!
I weary of your hollow, ceaseless
moans—
Lamenting ever o'er those unseen graves,
Built with primeval stones!

Thou world of restless thought!
Say! wilt thou ever find repose at
last?
Or will all lessons that the Heavens have
taught
Die—with the dying blast?

* * * * *

Hush! there may come a time
For peace and joy, as well as times to
weep—
And rest may therein dwell, complete,
sublime,
Even on thy waves, O Deep!

Hush! there may be a realm
Where lightnings shall not burn, nor
Death affright—
Where winds shall not uproot, or storms
o'erwhelm,
And where — THERE SHALL BE
LIGHT!

THE CAVERN BY THE SEA.

A TRADITION.

SHE stood in the centre of the cave,
And around her weary feet were
spread,
Beyond the wash of the Baltic wave,
The spoils of the shipwrecked and the
dead.

And the space was broad of the gloomy
vault,
And the roof, with its noble arch, was
high,
Yet still on the walls of spar, or salt,
Fell some faint beams of the autumn
sky.

Oh! the withered brow that had once been
fair,
With the bloom of a girlhood scarce
yet passed!
Oh! the letters of sorrow written there!
Oh! the gnawing pain that must ever
last!

For there was no longer the tender
cheek,
And the tender brow of a fresh, young
maid,
And the soft, dark eyes, that have power
to speak
Far more of love than by lips betrayed.

And a tall, dark man was by her side—
Of a heavy build—of a stalwart size,
With a lip and a brow of gloomy pride,
With the gleam of a savage in his
eyes.

And she knelt, in her anguish, at his
feet,
And besought him so that he turned
away
From the pleading lips and the eyes so
sweet,
From the heaven of peace, to the
darkest day.

For she spoke in a language keen, if
brief,
Of the once bright visions, now so
dim—

And a world of almost hopeless grief
Looked out in that sad gaze raised to
him.

But he answered her with a blow—an
oath!

And he stabbed her next with his own
cruel hand—
With word and with knife—for he stabbed
with both!

Then laid her down on the blood-stained
sand.

And she lay at his feet, and never stirred,
Not a cry, not a prayer from her pale
lips rose,
Though they parted once, but without a
word,
For her heart had broken beneath his
blows.

One moment he paused with a startled
look!

Then he scooped in the sand, for her
slender form,
A grave, with an arm that scarcely shook,
And placed "IT" there, though "IT"
yet was warm.

Then he sat awhile, with his stupid gaze
Still fixed on the spot where the corpse
was laid,
And his thoughts, perforce, went back to
days

When her youth was fresh—ere her
steps had strayed.

Ah me! it was cruel to slay her thus!
Yet he knew no penitent word nor creed;
And the Hell, that the priests predict for
us
Who sin, shall follow that shameless
deed.

Oh! the soul of the damned is surely his!
For an act more cruel had scarce been
done;
But he only heard, with a sudden *whiz*,
A bat fly in from the rising sun.

Then the dawning brightness caught his
eye,
And flickered in, on the roof of stone,
And he knew that it must be time to fly—
That the safer shades of the night were
gone.

And yet—had he heart to leave her there,
In a grave of such unholy rest?
Oh! hath he forgotten she once was fair,
And had slept so lovingly on his breast?

Shall she never come, at the end of toil,
To greet his steps on his homeward
path?

Nay! over her lies the heavy soil,
Heaped up by his own cruel hands of
wraith.

Shall her hands prepare no more that meal,
 So grateful after the working day?
 Is it true that she never more could feel,
 Nor even for deeds of mercy pray?

Would she come to him in the dead of
 night,
 And drag him *here*, where her corpse
 was laid?
 With her eyes of blue, and her brow of
 white,
 And her small hands yellow *as the*
dead!

Though this were scarcely the sharpest
 blow

At his after-peace, nor yet the worst,
 But rather that he must henceforth know
Himself as a man—a thing—accursed!

And he pondered much and long on this,
 Though he scarcely knew for why or
 how;

Yet the fear *would* come, like a serpent's
 hiss!

As the damp dews gathered on his brow.

At last he fled from the hateful spot,
 To a space of fresher, wider range—
 Though whither to wander he knew not,
 For his thoughts seemed all confused
 and strange.

He would quit for ever that rocky beach,
 That cave, with its ghastly crimson
 dyes—

At least he would stray beyond the reach
 Of a curious step or of prying eyes.

So he wandered away as the sun went
 down,

So he wandered away as the months
 rolled o'er,

And the tints of the woods grew green,
 then brown,

But by human eyes he was seen no
 more!

Yes! the sun went down, and the sun arose,

And the seasons came, then passed
 again;

There were summer fruits, there were
 winter snows,

And the storms howled over the hill and
 plain.

And the young and gay of his friends
 before,

No longer were those that he had known,
 For their brows were lined, and their
 beards were hoar,

And each one's voice had a graver tone.

So his friends and his comrades passed
 away,

And the rustic homes he had known
 were filled

With the clans that belonged to a later
 day;

New voices rang, where the old were
 stilled.

For the search for him had been in vain,
 Wherever the anxious footsteps led,

Though they searched for love, though they
 searched for gain,

And—as last—they spoke of him as
 dead!

No one shall learn where his grave may be,
 Mid the southern flowers, or the northern
 snows,

On the mountain height, or the stormy
 sea,

He will rest in a spot that no man
 knows!

An outcast ever, on every land,
 What life of a darker fate could be?
 With the stain of blood on his cruel hand,
 "Was there ever a man so cursed as
 he?"

'Tis said that he sickened then of life,
 That he raved, at last, for the boon of
 rest—

So tired he grew of the inward strife—
 So tired of the realms of the unblest!

For some have a curious craze of brain,
 And believe that the Future *must* bring
 Peace!

When the hard defeat, or the over-strain,
 And the many pangs of our life shall
 cease!

So let him rest! for we know not—we—
 The punishments framed for another
 sphere:

Whatever their darker forms may be
 Shall never be known to dwellers here

THE OCEAN DREAM.

I STOOD beside the ocean, gently stirred
By twilight's dying breezes, when I heard
A voice of melancholy, sad, but faint,
Fill the calm air with its heart-breaking
plaint.

With tones so marvellously sweet and clear,
It struck upon my wondering, listening
ear,

That, through mine own dull grief, I felt
I fain

Must listen to a voice of such wild pain!

"Thou weapest—yes! thou, too, art
desolate!

Yet, feeble mourner, what can be thy
fate

To mine?—what thy swift-passing human
woe

To that of everlasting grief below?

"Nay! I will tell thee! that thou may'st
no more

Disturb *my* greater sorrow, that, before,
Held all the winds and waves as with a
thrill

Of sympathetic pain—hear! and be still!

"Know—I was once alone, in a dark
cave,

In a vast solitude—the sombre wave
Rolled back into the realms of heartless
day,

As morning's pensive vapours swept away.

"I said it would be sweet indeed to sleep
In some soft pearly cavern of the deep,
Then shall the mad dreams of this earth
be o'er,

Then shall *he* poison my sad life no more.

"And so into the silent depths I sank,
Where tangled sea-weeds grew up thick
and rank,

Where I could hear no mariner's rude
shout,

Where strange and eyeless fish swam in
and out.

"I lay—ah me! I know not for how long,
Until, one night, I heard *his* once glad
song.

And saw him near me, in so frail a boat,
His skilled hands even barely kept afloat.

"Oh! through the billows' melancholy
boom

Came that dear voice, and through the
cavern's gloom

Shone that loved face—ah! eyes of other
days!

Why had they ever turned from me their
gaze?

"Eyes sweet and passionate, and yet
withal

Full of the tragic shadows that appal—
Eyes none could ever gaze into, but feel
The very soul—the very senses reel.

"No noble woman, with the sweet, pure
brow

Of perfect womanhood, would love as
thou

Hast loved! Go hence—for evermore!
And yet,

One thing I fain would beg of thee!
FORGET!

"So once he spake! 'Forget!'—that
hapless word,

Whose bitter echoes on the earth I heard!
Forget! ah—never! save when he should
come

To share oblivion in mine ocean home!

"I stayed the sudden shock of his despair,
I bound his clasped hands with my
braided hair;

I drew him down, and held him to my
breast,

Then laid him on the ocean moss to rest.

"Ah! now, I said, I shall not be alone,
For ever listening to the sobbing moan
Of restless waters, or the shrill, wild cry
Of sea-mews flitting through a darkening
sky.

"No! greater, sweeter joys shall now be
mine,

In the calm hours of starlight and moon-
shine,

Upon the silvered sands of some lone
shore,

When he shall be mine own for ever-
more!

"Yet as I looked into his pallid face,
And held his rigid form in mine embrace,
Even as the red sun rose above the sea
His eyes were upward turned—*away from me!*

"He shook off all the fetters that were mine—
He raised his clasped hands with a look divine;
I saw him slowly rise to meet that sun—
The love that drew him from mine arms had won!"

THE SPIRIT OF LOONA.

A Tradition of the Coast.

OUR GOSSIP'S INTRODUCTION.

"THERE was a time when I heerd tell
A tale I yet remember well—
Of yon grim halls of cold moonshine
And ghosts—the Halls of Angerstein!

"And when ye ask—Can I recall
A legend of the days no more,
Of lady's bower—of regal hall,
Of demons, or of knights galore—

"To please ye I will even try
To 'spin a yarn' from days gone by—
To call back spirits, grim and grey,
That wandered, hereabouts, one day.

"But though in only simple rhymes
I tell of deeds of ancient times,
Yet this believe ye, *I know well*
How true the legends are I tell!"*

THE SPIRIT OF LOONA.

A Tradition of the Coast.

FEARFUL and wild traditions have, of old,
Of Loona's castellated rocks been told—
Strange eerie tales of goblin and of sprite
Seen wandering on its lonely shores at night!
And few there were of stragglers lingering,
when
The ghastly twilight deepened in its glen,

To watch that rugged coast's fantastic pile
Of age-stained cliffs, that stretched beyond
the eye,
Gleam luridly in the grand, stormy smile
Of ocean's ever-varying,* fitful sky.
For some years since, in that lone, sea-
girt vale,
As once upon a time I heard the tale,
A lady, as they say, of gentle mien,
One gloomy twilight evening had been
seen,
With cheek and lips and brow most sad
and pale,
Watch her departing lover's farewell sail—
And as she turned from it at last her gaze,
She bade one true and faithful friend to
raise—
Some day that might be early—so she
said—
When she of her despair and grief lay
dead—
A monument of her in that strange spot,
Where rude and curious steps should
trouble not.
There she would fain have rest—although
the mound
Raised o'er her might be on unholy
ground!

Oh! strange tales of her life's last hours
were hinted,
And melancholy voices, it was told,
When moonlight's rays the distant rocks
had tinted,
Their wail poured o'er her, as the storms
blew cold.
Forsooth it was a ghostly sight, I ween,
To meet a tomb in that deserted scene,
Where, far from holy Church and convent
wall,
The mad, wild tempests to each other call!
Yet, wrapt within her mantle's chiselled
fold,
And looking outward on the ocean flood,
With look so sternly motionless and cold,
Calmly, it seemed, that sculptured image
stood!
The deepening shades were fanciful and
dim,
The rocks frowned darkly in the growing
night,

* Although keeping to the *spirit* of our old gossip's story, in more senses than *one*, we have been obliged to modernise her phraseology—which in some places was hardly intelligible.

Yet, well defined, each slender, graceful
limb
Stood out in the mysterious, fitful light.

Pale moonlight touched her tresses'
classic wreath—
Touched the fair, noble brow that shone
beneath,
Whose once sweet, youthful lines were
sternly fixed,
Whose icy apathy seemed all unmixed
With aught of human sympathy—with
aught
That spoke of mortal suffering, or
thought—
Nay! rather those dark eyes, so cold, so
glazed,
Told of the perfect, passionless repose,
The utter, full forgetfulness of woes,
Of her o'er whom that monument was
raised!

Hour after silent hour had passed away,
Hour after hour, and yet a gentle ray
Of pallid, fading moonlight still was
thrown,
In flickering lines upon that shape of
stone,—
Earth lay in slumber wrapt, and on the
deep
The wind of autumn sighed itself to sleep.
And yet there still was one who watched
and wept,
Who still a vigil lone and mournful kept,
Whose voice of melancholy and despair,
Poured its wild burden on the midnight
air!

"Fedora! loved and lost! whose home
may be
Where there is neither moonlight, earth,
nor sea—
Return! return to our dark, stormy shore,
That I may gaze in thy dear eyes once
more!
Ah! speak to me, and let me hear again
The chords all hands but thine must strike
in vain!
Oh! can it be that, in some newer sphere,
No memory of this earth thy soul can
move—
No memory of the love once all too dear
Can longer the wild depths of passion
move—
Art thou *for ever* lost! . . ."

Veiled in the mist,
The moon had now the sombre ocean
kissed,
When by the same grey, monumental
stone,
That reared its age-stained height in that
grim place,
Washed by the billows that, with ceaseless
moan,
Dashed, year by year, against its marble
face—
A solitary form was seen to stand,
Yet threw no shadow on the silvered
sand;
Silent—as one whose spirit grief had
bowed,
Its gloomy outlines shaped by gloomier
cloud.

Oh! well he knew the long, unrippled
hair,
The form so fragile, and the face so fair,
The chiselled lips—still more the eyes of
light,
Once soft and *once*—how gloriously bright!
Though now no more the *tender* eyes, that
first,
Like glowing stars, through gloom and
shade had burst—
For on the marble, pallid countenance
Traces of strange, weird anguish had been
wrought,
Told by the speechless and despairing
glance,
The broad-lined brow of mutely suffering
thought—
So the declining head—the tangled tress,
Flung o'er her arms in heedless loveliness,
The rigid attitude—all spoke too well
Of grief no earthly language now could
tell!

He spoke! he called her by each thrilling
name
That love, and love alone, hath right to
claim—
He sought to clasp her to his heart once
more,
That he might hold her there till life was
o'er,
But warningly she raised her spectre hand,
And pointed outwards from the darkening
land—
As if that ocean, now so drear, so cold,
O'er her last resting-place for ever rolled—

Then, once again, her large dark eyes she
 raised,
 And long and sadly into his she gazed,
 Bending the last—last look on earth at
 him—
 So gazed—until her shape grew pale and
 dim!
 Slowly it floated down the spell-bound
 main—
 He sought to stay its shadowy form in
 vain!

Nor was he heard of more—my tale is
 closed.
 Whether within the Convent he reposed,
 Or bravely on the field of battle fell,
 There is no human record now to tell!

THE USELESS SPELL.

'Tis the hour when the witches breathe
 their spells
 O'er the pale, blue flame of the dying
 lamp,
 As the wild wind rises, sinks, or swells,
 Through the vaulted roof of the cavern
 damp—

'Tis the hour when the lover's light guitar
 Rings out in the night-breeze sweet and
 far;
 When we hear through the heavy cypress
 gloom,
 The moan of a spirit in its tomb—

'Tis the hour when the moon, with her
 light serene,
 Shines calmly down on the rocky scene,
 When a breathless silence holds our
 bowers,
 And a mystery weighs on the dew-bright
 flowers!—

When nothing is heard but the owl's weird
 cry,
 Or the hum of a beetle swinging by,
 Or the murmur of waters the damp sands
 laving,
 Or the rustle of leaves in the light breeze
 waving.

One dark, lone place was peopled, of old,
 With shapes that were scarce of an earthly
 mould,

With sounds unheard in the broad day-
 light,
 With eyes of a glance too weirdly bright!

And yet, as the moon of Autumn sank,
 And the waves of the ocean rose and
 broke,
 There stood on the rude and rock-bound
 bank
 A figure wrapt in an ample cloak—

And if it seemed of a youthful form,
 The brow was marked by the furrows
 deep,
 Indented once by a fearful storm,
 And lined by the griefs that cannot sleep.

No fears felt *he* for the phantoms dread—
 He had learned *their* secrets in earth's
 dark caves—
 He had often been with the shadowy dead,
 And his steps had haunted the strangest
 graves.

Pale flower-bells, plucked in a haunted
 vale,
 Beside him lay, as he breathed a spell—
 As the light of the moon grew grim and
 pale—
 A spirit to call from her ocean-cell.

So he threw on the chill and trembling
 water
 A poison distilled from a serpent's tooth,
 The whitened bones of a field of slaughter,
 And leaves that had withered in their
 youth—

And then, as he raised his arms aloft,
 His voice on the startled silence broke,
 Like the tones of a lover, full and soft,
 As solemnly through the gloom he spoke—

"O thou! whose bowers, below, shine
 brighter
 Than even the sunset's parting glow,
 O thou! whose beautiful brow is whiter
 Than even the flakes of Winter's snow,—

"Arise from thy ocean bed, so drear
 And dark, in the sullen depths beneath,
 Where thy wild eyes shine with unearthly
 fear,
 Where thy brow is crowned by a coral
 wreath.

"Not the sound of a breaking wave is heard,
Not the sound of a ripple, even, in motion;
For I, by the spell of a mighty word,
Have silenced the voice of the restless ocean.

"Arise from the halls no mortal enters,
From the halls so spacious and so fair—
Where the bright lamps hang from their lofty centres,
With a glitter no eyes of ours could bear."

A moment he paused in the silence dread,
And a wail came up as of those that weep,
And the waters backwards slowly spread,
As a spirit rose from the star-lit deep.

"From the halls of our dreaded King," she said—
"Where the sweet songs ring through the crystal hall,
Where the guests are seated, the banquet spread,
I arise! at the spell of a mortal's call!

"Thou rash of spirit! thou bold of word!
Say! what is thy daring will with me!
By what dark fears are the billows stirred,
And the voice of the tempest hushed at sea?"

"One potent still in thy realms so wide,
Yet one that ever must rest unknown,
Or its power at once is lost!" replied
The wizard then, in a hollow tone—

"Enough! while the stars of midnight shine,
I come with a plea to thy mighty deep,
For a maiden—a maiden that should be mine,
In thy crystal caves is laid asleep.

"For she fled from my arms, one hapless hour!
Then the pleasures of earth grew dull and vain,
And I cared no longer for wealth, or power—
Ah! give her back to my arms again."

He pleaded long, but there seemed no trace
Of a kindly thought for a mortal's care

On the sea-queen's pale and marble face—
Her eyes were fixed with a haughty stare!

And was it with anger that those eyes—
With something even of a jealous glow
Turned back from a glance at earth's fair skies,
To the colder realms that lay below?

"She is, I see, of a mortal birth,
This maiden—that in our caves lies dead:
No spell of ours can return to earth
One pure as she, who from man hath fled!

"Our power can avail thee nothing here,
For I know too well that her stainless soul
Hath passed to a purer, holier sphere,
To a world beyond our poor control."

* * * * *

So the waves of the ocean break once more,
And the twinkling lamps of a home-bound barque
Shine feebly out as they shone before—
The only lights in the solemn dark!

THE OCEAN STAR.

STAR of the Ocean—pure and brilliant light,
Shining on sea and shore—
To some thou art but as a spark—a bright,
A diamond spark—no more!

Thou seemest such a countless space beyond
This world of ours, this world so sorrow-tossed—
Reflected both on sea and woodland pond,
One moment seen—then lost!

And yet thy tiny, thy mysterious ray
Hath lit this far-off planet myriad ages,
To thee a thousand years are but a day—
Our lives the briefest pages.

Thou smilest calmly on the dewy morn—
Thou smilest calmly through the twilight sky:
What, unto thee, the centuries that are born,
The centuries that may die!

Oh! nought can change thee—bright suns
rise and set,

Alike on palace and on peasant's cot,
And worlds of human beings fume and
fret,

And pass—but *thou* dost not!

Thou art one of the signs of Heaven on
high,

Gilding this empty space in sombre
night,

That none shall upward look with scornful
eye

And say—THERE IS NO LIGHT.

Calmly thou smilest on the dewy morn,
Calmly thou shinest through the
twilight sky:

What, unto thee, the centuries that are
born—

The centuries that may die?

O unbeliever in the realms beyond,
There must be other worlds than meet
us here,

Where thou shalt fret no longer, nor
despond—

Where there is NO MORE FEAR!

I LINGERED BY THE SEA-SHORE.

I LINGERED by the sea-shore, as the moon
Rose slowly o'er the ocean's tranquil
wave,

And wondered if its placid rays full soon,
Or late, would fall upon an unfeared
grave!

I shun thee not, O Death! I have no
dread

Of thy grim face—thou king of mean
alarms!

I look before me for thy silent tread—

I shall not shrink back from thy bony
arms—

Thy voice in the wild storm affrights not
me—

Neither upon the ocean nor on shore—

Thy terrors in the lightning I may see,
Yet tremble not to hear thy thunder's
roar!

O Death! thou shalt be welcomed, and
not feared—

Save only if thy summons should
surprise;

For when thy ghastly presence I have
nearly,

I have not shuddered at thy hollow eyes.

Nay! thou may'st even be greeted with
a smile!

The joy of HOPE life's weary hour may
cross!

About *thee* is nor treachery nor guile,
Full oft thou art a gain and not a loss

Ah! many for thy mercy oft shall pray

When thou wilt listen not, O cruel
Death!

As through the weary night—the darker
day—

Thy suppliant draws the long, unwilling
breath.

O Death! be merciful, and hear our cries!
And let the fierce chain of our bondage
sever—

Give us, at last, the flower that never
dies,

That sleeps upon our silenced hearts for
ever.

ACROSS THE WATERS!

THERE came a song across the sea, one
night,

Full of a pathos strange to human ears—

A song of exquisite and wild delight,
Yet one that moved the heart to saddest
tears.

It came from earth, and yet of Heaven
it sighed,

A voice that seemed as of a richer day;

And as it gently floated down the tide,
It seemed to bear the listener's soul
away!

Ah! more than touched by human skill, it
seems

An echo rather of some higher sphere,

But rarely heard, save in our sweetest
dreams,

So thrilling are its notes, so strangely
clear!

Calmly we watch the veiling of the earth,
 The brightening of the fair and moon-lit
 skies,
 Remembering not our troubled human
 birth,
 Until the last faint, lingering echo dies.

Ah! nothing on the ear more softly falls,
 While the blue water of the ocean
 flows—
 Unlike the music heard in mansion-walls,
 It hath a tender, melancholy close.

So softly floated o'er the sea one night,
 Full of a pathos strange to human ears,
 A song of exquisite and wild delight,
 Yet one that moved the heart to saddest
 tears.

PEACE ON THE SEA-SHORE.

UPON the calm and sad sea-shore we feel
 Unlinked from earth and all its
 evil pains,
 And something like the peace of Heaven
 will steal
 Into the worn heart and disordered
 brains.

We hear no more the heavy beat of drums,
 The soul no longer swells with hope, or
 fear;
 To us the cry of sorrow rarely comes,
 And jarring strife is far, and rest is
 near.

That calm is as a friend, from whom
 proceeds
 No chiding for our follies, or our
 troubles—
 The heart that murmurs, and the heart
 that bleeds,
 Look, then, upon past cares as only
 bubbles!

And we may clasp our hot hands on our
 eyes,
 And let the salt tears trickle as they will,
 For *there* are no rude sounds—no jarring
 cries—
 The voice of the disturbing world is
 still.

We feel no shackles there upon our wrists,
 There are no argus-eyes a watch to
 keep—
 Our gaze may be bewildered by the mists
 Of tears, but none reproach us as we
 weep.

And here the spirit, most oppressed by
 grief,
 The outburst of despair the best controls;
 In the blue ocean skies there is relief—
 A promise as of realms of happier souls.

THE SAILOR TO HIS SWEETHEART.

AH—dream not, dearest, of the storms at
 sea!

Yet let thy prayers be with me on the
 deep—

I dread no dangers if thou art with me
 In all thy thoughts, in daylight or in
 sleep!

For thee I pray when tempests o'er me
 break,
 And vivid lightnings cleave the leaden
 air;
 I know then that thy sweet eyes are
 awake,
 Thy true love breathing for me many a
 prayer!

And then I lie and think of days to come,
 When we shall dwell together, in one
 cot
 Beside the sea—when blustering winds are
 dumb,
 And I no longer roam where *thou* art
 not!

O love! look forward!—we again shall
 meet,
 And I will tell thee tales of other lands—
 And look into thine eyes—so calm and
 sweet—
 And feel the warm clasp of thy tender
 hands!

So dream not, dearest, of the storms at
 sea!

Yet let thy prayers be with me on the
 deep—

I dread no dangers if thou art with me,
 In all thy thoughts, in daylight or in
 sleep!

A LAST JOY.

YET wearily, O love! I wait for thee—
The sun hath set, in crimson, on the sea—
The still air by no evening breeze is
stirred,
The boatswain's cheery song no more is
heard.

I would not shame thee by my feeble
tears,
And patiently I waited, all these years—
For well I know thy heart, like mine, was
beating,
In hopes of some glad day of future meet-
ing.

Ah, love! I now have wept thee many a
day,
Mine eyes are growing dim—my hair is
grey,
The step is feeble that was once so strong,
Oh! I have wept and waited, love, so
long!

The friends have left me, who once
crowded round
My bright and merry home—the cheery
sound
Of laughter is no more—all—*all* are gone,
And I am left, save for thy love, alone!

Some sleep their last sleep in a foreign
land,
Tended, it may be, by a stranger's hand;
Some under the dark rocks of the deep
sea;
Some by their kindred, under the yew-
tree.

Now, love, I weary of this life—bereft
So long of thee, scarce hope itself is left;
Though still for one last joy, O love, I
sigh!
Ah! let me see thy face once—ere I die!

THE SAILOR'S SWEETHEART.

THERE are no flowers to deck his lonely
grave—
Amongst the dank weeds of the sea he
sleeps;
And o'er his resting-place the Baltic wave
An ever-weary lamentation keeps—

Nor shall she, who has loved him, know
where rest
His bones amidst that ocean's ceaseless
strife—

Yet is his image treasured in her breast,
And there it shall sleep fondly, as in
life!

And when she hears the waves dash madly
in
Upon the caverned rocks, with clouds of
spray,
She listens sadly to their ceaseless din,
And trembles for her lover, far away.

And still she weeps not—still her grief is
dumb,

For she has faith in his returning yet—
And still she waits the day when he shall
come
To one who ever loves, nor shall forget.

And he will say—"My love! my own true
hearted!

The long, long sadness of our days is
o'er—
And we, dear one, who have so long been
parted,
Will leave the threshold of our home no
more!"

'Tis well for her that she can not awaken
To skies of hopeless shadow, as some
must—

'Tis well for her that faith can not be
shaken,
That she shall sleep—at last—in this
sweet trust!

OUT ON THE FAR SEA-SANDS.

OUT on the far sea-sands! with nothing
heard
Save the faint foot-fall on the yielding
sand—
Or the shrill greeting of a passing bird,
Winging its slow way to some foreign
land.

Out on the far sea-sands! with nothing
more
Than peaceful stretches of grey stones—
between
The mighty ocean and that dream-like
shore,
Yet, in the distance, to be faintly seen.

Out on the far sea-sands! with, overhead—
 Only a reach of calm, unsmiling sky,
 Out on the mighty sea's primeval bed—
 That world of monsters of a time gone
 by!

Full sad and solitary seems the space,
 And earth and heaven look both afar,
 not near—
 And Death stands weirdly, as before our
 face,
 While the soft hiss of coming waves we
 hear!

Death moves by his own dark, mysterious
 laws—
 And oft his voice is in the coming tide;
 And we have known no fear, no startled
 pause,
 Ere he is waiting sternly by our side!

FLOWERS OF THE SEA.

FLOWERS of the sea, strange flowers, un-
 known to land—

Anemones—that north winds never
 blight,
 That shine so brightly on the yellow sand—
 Whose fair eyes gladden ye, by day, by
 night!

Do mermaids use ye for a bridal wreath,
 Twining amongst their long braids of
 green hair?

Or with them deck the brows of watery
 death—
 Or round their arms as coiling serpents
 wear?

Or are ye used for sea-bowers of delight!
 For bouquets of rose-pink, or green, or
 red?

Or are the purer ones of grey, or white,
 Used as grave offerings for the youthful
 dead?

Forgetful of all storms above, ye lie,
 Under the restful fathoms of the deep—
 Careless of all the earthly flowers that die,
 Careless of all the earthly eyes that
 weep.

And underneath thy brilliant coral bells
 The slippery eel or slimy serpent dives—
 And in a myriad many-coloured cells
 A myriad little beings live their lives.

Yet, in one thing ye are as earth's rude
 weeds;

For brightly as thy fairest blossom glows
 Beneath the dark green waters—still it
 needs

The perfume of the lily or the rose!

LIGHT UPON THE SEA.

OH! thou fair star! whose tender rays have
 kissed

The drifting outlines of the ocean mist—
 How often have I watched thy steady light
 Illumine the dark shadows of the night!

The sages of this earth can not divine
 The many mighty secrets that are thine—
 So jealously protected in thy march
 Through heaven's magnificent and silent
 arch!

Even with our boasted wisdom we yet
 know

Of thee but little in our paths below;
 Thou art a mystery, oh! thou star—and
 still

A mystery shalt remain, by Heaven's own
 will.

How softly dost thou shine upon the
 waves!

And, knowing every secret of the caves,
 And every *rendezvous* of wildest shores,
 Thy bright ray hundreds of strange haunts
 explores!

The centuries come and go, and we remain
 But as a moment on earth's shifting plain;
 Thou art for ever here, and yet, no less,
 Thy secrets never mortals shall possess!

THE WORLD OF WATER.

'Tis strange to look out on a world of
 waters,

To know it spreads for thousand miles
 away,

That countless of the earth's lost sons and
 daughters

Lie silently in cavern, gulf, or bay;
 That side by side, in depths unknown, may
 sleep

Those, foreign both by country and by
 name,

Yet rest together calmly in the deep,
 Some good or great, some stained by
 bitter shame.

Nor tomb, nor churchyard, there shall be
apart,

For monarch, subject, pauper, or for
slave—

The brow of glorious bays, the broken
heart,

All slumber in one undistinguished grave.

Pale corpses from a hundred differing
lands,

Pale corpses from a thousand differing
hearths,

O'er whom no gifts are strewn by loving
hands,

Round whose rude tombs there wind no
trodden paths.

Yet! wife and mother—it shall be that
thou

Wilt recognise in Heaven thy well-
beloved—

Nay! let no doubt o'ercast thy tender brow,
Nor yet thy heart by faithless fears be
moved.

Ah! it is strange to muse—and some might
shrink

With dark, disturbing thoughts of dread,
or fear,

When looking to the great unknown, and
think

They shall not trace them in that mystic
sphere.

For some still feel a cold, mysterious
dread,

Lest, in that world of mercy and of
grace,

They shall not meet again the lost, loved
dead,

Nor met—shall recognise them—face to
face!

THE ALBATROSS.

O ALBATROSS! thou fair and noble bird,
Whose cry is in the tempest only heard,

Whose wings of pearly white, athwart the
gloom,

Are harbingers of tempest and of doom—

Where is thy dwelling, where that home of
thine,

Where moonlight ventures not, nor stars
shall shine,

And where thy strange cry startles—as the
scream

Of eldrich spirits in an evil dream!

No tempests of the ocean thee affright,
Neither at eve, nor morn, nor open day;
Only in peaceful shadows of the night,
Are seen no more thy wings of silver-grey.

O bird of evil fate! as some have said—
Wild bird the mariners so deeply dread—
Thou callest to forewarn of coming evil,
Rather than as forerunner of the devil!

They do defame thee, bird of silver breast!
Skim fearlessly the ocean's foaming
crest!—

No evil in thy soft calm eyes I see,
And none dare harm thee—thou art ever
free!

THE MARINER'S GRAVE.

HE rests amongst the monsters of the
ocean,

Where the deep waters have no voice, no
force—

He hears not there its ever-ceaseless
motion

Waking the angry echoes in its course.

His heart is wrung with neither grief nor
fear;

Grief—that he shall not meet “her”
loving gaze

Till the sad lapse of many a dreary year,
As the strong vessel ploughs its outward
ways.—

Fear—lest some heavy trouble should
befall,

Whose shadow shall not reach across the
deep—

Fear—lest he should not hear a piteous
call,

While he the “watches of the night”
shall keep.

Yet once—or more—in dark, tempestuous
nights,

These thoughts had crossed his sad and
troubled soul;

Or under northern skies of pallid lights,
While heavily the ship would pitch and
roll.

But now these dreads and pains are of the
past,
With all their tender hopes and haunting
fears;
The tossing billows and the angry blast
No longer sound in his unheeding ears.

For now his resting-place is in the deep,
Where sounds of earth's lamentings echo
never—
The sounds of those that moan, or those
that weep;
For they have passed away—have passed
for ever!

THE SLEEPLESS VOICE.

HOPELESS and dreary sound the billows
wild,
Lifting their white heads to the stormy
sky,
And where, till now, both youth and beauty
smiled,
They gladly lay their burden down to
die.

O foaming water, wilt thou *never* rest?
Is there *no* pause in thine impetuous
race?

But fronting still despair — with angry
breast,
And baring to the storm thy livid face!

Hast thou no calm recess where tears may
fall,
Unwitnessed by the grim world's mock-
ing eyes—
No flowers! beneath our dead hope's
funeral pall!
The gnawing worm alone, that never
dies?

Dark and precipitous the mountain paths!
The violets shelter under fallen leaves,
The winds blow shrilly round the shep-
herds' hearths,
The swallow hides beneath the friendly
eaves.

Hopeless and dreary sound the billows
wild,
Lifting their white heads to the stormy
sky;

And where till now both youth and beauty
smiled,
They gladly lay their burdens down to
die.

The song of mountain streams is heard no
more,
Waking the many echoes of the stones—
The falling torrents hush their angry roar,
The north seas only keep their restless
moans.

Yet vainly would they wash the rock's
rough base,
In puerile assault, with ceaseless spray—
The giant smiles to heaven, nor leaves a
trace
Of angry warfare on its surface grey!

Hopeless and dreary sound the billows
wild,
Lifting their white heads to the stormy
sky,
And where till now both youth and beauty
smiled,
They gladly lay their burden down to
die!

THE SONG OF THE LANDSMAN.

"O FISHERMAN! come out to sea!
For fairer eve there cannot be;
Let each brave sailor man his boat,
And set his cheery flag afloat!

"O Fisherman! run up your sail,
To gently breast the fitful gale;
The evening sky o'erhead is bright,
Grey mists bespeak a peaceful night.

"O Fisherman! good dreams and light,
To all our faithful friends in sight!
As each man, with a willing oar,
Floats his light vessel from the shore.

"'Twill be a very dream of bliss
To row upon a night like this!
The wind is soft, the sky is clear,
The tide but murmurs in mine ear!

"O Fisherman! come out to sea!
For fairer eve there cannot be;
Let each brave sailor man his boat,
And set his cheery flag afloat!"

THE SONG OF THE FISHERMAN.

"THE breeze is soft, the breeze is low,
And scarce the waters ebb and flow,
Yet something in that breeze's sigh
Forbodes no feeble tempest nigh!

"See yon dark line upon the water—
The dense fog by the west wind brought
her!
And hearken to that restless moan—
A storm is in that sullen tone!

"See how yon idle pennant swings,
Look at yon sea-gull's flagging wings,
And yet how warily, away
She floats to some snug, sheltered bay!

"How faintly throbs the heavy air!
How dense the vapours rising there,
Now hiding each black rock and steep
That borders here the brooding deep!

"It is a grim and ghastly mist,
That bodes no good to man, I wist!
No breath disturbs the sky's dense air,
And few the stars that glimmer there!

"If thou, O landsman, would be wise,
Learn thou the lessons of the skies,—
The hour that bodes most deadly ill
Is oft the hour most calm and still!

"There *may* be silence on the deep,
And yet the waves but *seem* asleep,—
I would not trust one single hour
A vessel to yon treacherous power!

"Go to thy mansion in the town,
And muse, beyond the tempest's frown,
How reckless lives are cast away
By those that neither watch nor pray!"

THE UNFURLING OF THE FLAG.*

O FLAG! whose colours, nobly won,
Have governed for a thousand years
The seas where many an English son
Lies buried—wept by England's tears,
How gaily, as thy sailors shout,
Thy unstained length is floating out!

Ah! flag—of many a boastful story,
Beneath our native British skies,
Ah! flag of honour and of glory,
How often fanned by widows' sighs!
Yet, oh! float out upon the breeze,—
We shame thee with such thoughts as
these!

That pure and stainless length hath waved
Where sea of unknown fathoms rages,
On rudest rock *thy* name engraved
Will tell a tale to unborn ages—
Fearless of storm and angry blast,
For ever shall thy glory last!

O! flag of conquest and of death—
O! flag—whose records are of slaughter,
Thy sailors with their dying breath
Will shout thy victories o'er the water!
Float out—where'er the storms are high,
We win the fight for thee—or die!

Our sons will ever tell with pride
How—hand to hand their fathers stood—
And fell together—side by side,
Nor wailed the loss of noble blood.
Float out—float out o'er England's sea—
They slumber well who die for thee!

RETROSPECTION.

I STOOD on the shores of the ebbing sea,
The shores that ever are dear to me—
To wait and watch, but to watch in vain,
For the steps that never could come again.

I listened, with strained and anxious ear,
For the voice that I knew was soft and
clear;
I looked in vain for the calm, blue eyes—
They shine not *here*, but in holier skies!

For the only light that met my view
Was the ocean-stretch of grey and blue,
And I looked back still, through the blind-
ing tears,
For the smiles and storms of departed
years;—

For the ever-thoughtful feet that paced
O'er the coloured sand and the flinty waste,
With the clear calm brain, with the search-
ing thought,
By a thousand lessons ever taught.

* On seeing a new flag hoisted at a sea-side place. (To be set to music.)

By the lessons that ever to him were
plain,
Yet might not lighten another brain,
That many a tale could brightly tell
Of the grandest cavern, the smallest shell.

And the waters warred, or the waters
slept,
Unheeding the weary eyes that wept,
And the only sound that caught mine ear
Seemed an echo faint in another sphere.

THE LONELY VIGIL.

THE moonlight shimmers upon the deep,
And I sit and muse as it fades away;
For a vigil long and sad I keep,
Through the passing night and the
coming day:

And I think of the things that die or
fade,
Of the joys that shall no more return,
Of the seeds that perish in blighting shade,
Of the lessons that all in life must learn.

And often the silver crown of rest
Can never be worn in a world of ours;
And the peace of Heaven alone is blessed,
And only reached in our last few hours—

Nay! sometimes never on earth is gained,
Or at least is tarnished by evil breath;
For the world's coarse plaudits need be
strained,
Or the seeds they scatter are seeds of
death.

For such is a poisoned crown of glory,
Or a wreath of flowers that were not
weeded
Of foolish praise—or an oft-told story,
And something more and beyond is
needed.

Yet many have worn this crown, and
thought
They shone in the eyes of men and
God;
Nor can they see that its flowers are
naught
But the meanest flowers of the meanest
soil!

SEA-SHELLS AND THEIR TENANTS.

FAIRY gifts to the rude sea-beach,
With thy soft blush tints and thy pearly
dyes,
Full many a lesson ye can teach
To the thoughtful mind, to the watchful
eyes.

For thy hues are tender and refined,
Like the fairest brows of the earth's
fair girls;
And thy banquet halls with pink are lined,
And thy chambers white with the white
of pearls.

And the little fish slip in and out,
In the still calm hours of the June
moonlight;
And the wild winds rock them oft about,
In the tempests rude of a summer night.

Oh! ye are as happy as Spring's gay
birds—
More happy than things of prouder
birth—
And the bitter torture of heartless words
Belongs to the noble sons of earth!

And yet ye have foes, if foes less hard,
To whom ye are ever choicest prey,
But, oh! in the eyes of a simple bard
Thy life is as glad as flowers of
May!

For ye have delicate halls, I vouch,
As fair as an artist ever drew,
And thy lady's chamber—thy royal
couch
Are oft of the sea's most glorious hue.

THE SAILOR'S WIFE.

ALONE by the waves she sat—her child
Lay hushed in slumber upon her breast,
But the winds and the waters both were
wild,
And the seagulls found no place of rest—
(Alas for her—for her watch was
vain,
He came not back from the deep
again!)

And by day and night that watch she kept,
 With a hope and faith for ever strong—
 And the storms they woke, and the storms
 they slept,
 And the hours passed on, till the months
 grew long—
 (Alas! for her, for her watch was
 vain,
 He came not back from the sea
 again!)

But he said that he might be long afloat,
 And she knew that his arms were arms
 of skill—
 So she still looked hopefully for his boat,
 Though the winds and the waves had
 long been still—
 (Alas! for her, for her watch was
 vain,
 He came not back from the deep
 again!)

“Oh! he will not leave me long alone,
 Still waiting ever his well-known call—
 As the sullen winds in the caverns moan,
 As the dreary shadows of evening fall—”
 (Alas! for her, for her watch was
 vain,
 He came not back from the deep
 again!)

“Will his cheery voice be heard no more,
 As the last deep bells of midnight strike?
 Will the storms come up, and the storms
 blow o’er,
 And my tears and prayers be vain
 alike?”
 (Alas! for her—for her prayer was
 vain—
 He came not back from the deep
 again!)

WAITING.

O LOVE, thou art late, and the sun has
 long set,
 And the light has grown pale on the
 sea and the land;
 Ah! can it be true that thy heart could
 forget—
 That my faith was a flower merely
 planted in sand?

Ah, love! in the long, weary vista that lies
 Spread out on the wide earth before my
 sad gaze,
 Is there nothing, oh! nothing to gladden
 mine eyes,
 And to brighten the long, weary stretch
 of my days?

O love, thou art late; since the heat of
 the noon
 I have waited and listened, thy footsteps
 to hear—
 And the sea will be veiled by the twilight
 full soon,
 And my heart will be breaking with
 sorrow and fear.

I am weary of weeping—of listening long
 To the sounds of the village far out on
 the plain;
 I am weary of hearing the sea-gull’s weird
 song,
 Shall the tears—shall the prayers of my
 heart be in vain?

And the moments seem hours, and the
 hours as they move
 Are like years in their length, are like
 years in their weight,
 Ah, keep me not waiting, my love—oh!
 my love!
 The moon is now rising—the evening
 grows late.

The shadows are heavy, the sun has long
 set—
 And the light has grown pale—on the
 sea and the land—
 Yet still I believe *not* thy heart could forget,
 And my faith but a flower—merely
 planted in sand.

THE OUT-BOUND SHIP.

“THOU out-bound ship, on the far-off sea—
 Say! what may thy freight and burden be?
 Is it youth, with the fearless, open brow,
 Or feeble age, at the vessel’s prow?

“Whom art thou taking far over the deep?
 Are they eyes that smile, or the eyes that
 weep,
 Or the wearied brains, or the world-tired
 hearts,
 In a newer world to play their parts?

"Do their eyes look back, with a longing
gaze,
To the simple pleasures of earlier days;
To the hope, to the love that is now in
vain—
To the home that they ne'er may see
again?

"We will pray for thee, for a passage fair,
Though we know not why thou goest, nor
where;
Nor can we fathom the hearts that beat
At the line where the past and present
meet.

"Oh, thou who art outbound, look not
back;
There are silver streaks on thy outward
track;
If even thy passage be drear and long,
Let thy sad fears rest and thy hopes be
strong!

"Bright years of thy life may lie before;
Let the doubts that haunt thee haunt no
more,
For a fairer sun may yet arise,
Than ever has lit *thy* native skies!"

A DREAMY HOUR.

OH, the gentle wash of the far-off ocean!
The sound of a placid English sea—
A myriad thoughts of past emotion
Its tenderest echoes bring to me!

Thou pine-wood!—under thy shade I sit,
The shade of thy dark and whispering
trees—
And the colours come and the colours flit
With the passing touch of the ocean
breeze.

And I hear the sound of a long-drawn sigh,
Like the sound of a hopeless spirit's wail,
As the dusky bats flit softly by,
And cross the light of the planets pale—

For a glow on the earth still softly lingers,
And a thousand tender colours blend—
And moved by the touch of fairy fingers,
The long green grasses move and bend!

And the sound as of soft Eolian strings
Seems lingering yet in the quivering air,

Like the faintest echo of angel wings,
Or the brush of a maiden's rippled hair.

And the world is here forgotten—only
Of peace and rest is the silence telling;
And the heart is glad, if the heart is
lonely,
While tranquil joy in the dusk is
dwelling.

Yes! the voice of the world intrudes not
here,
Not the heart that hates, but the heart
that loves,
For the echo is rare of grief or fear,
To break the spell of the silent groves.

Oh! the gentle wash of the far-off ocean!
The sound of a placid English sea—
A myriad thoughts of past emotion
Its tenderest echoes bring to me!

THE SEA-GULL.

THOU beautiful bird of the stormy deep,
While the winds and the waters join in
strife,
And the tides their restless murmurs keep,
Thy life, at least, is a happy life!

For thou in the very storms delight
That blanch with fear the cheeks of the
brave;
And the raging blasts of a winter's night
Awake not thee in thy sea-girt cave!

Oh, thou hast a calm, untroubled life,
With little of fear, of want, of pain;
And the elements' fiercest, saddest strife,
Is thy hour of joy and thy hour of gain.

No tumult ever thy courage daunts—
And safe in the depth of stone-hewn
caves
The shipwrecked come to thy dismal
haunts,
With a thousand gifts on the greedy
waves.

Thou broodest in vaults where no man
enters,
Nor light can pierce from the brightest
skies—
With roofs of a thousand dazzling centres,
That shine not brighter than thy bright
eyes!

SONG OF THE MERMAID.

"OH, fair is my home in the deep, deep
sea,

Far under the billows of green and
blue—

And a couch of silver I keep for thee,
And the ocean flowers are bright of
hue—

"More beautiful far than flowers can be
That bloom on the plains of higher
lands;

More pure than the lilies they seem to me,
As they shine on the ocean's coloured
sands.

"For I stole a lily once, that grew
In a rocky cleft by the ocean shore;
But it faded into a sickly hue,
And its fragrant perfume soon was o'er!

"Come down! come down! I have watched
so long,

And the wind is fierce and the water
whirls;

I will sing thee many a lone, lorn song,
In mansions of mine, of shells and
pearls.

"Come down, come down to the fair sea-
caves,

To the halls of crystals, gems and
spars;

There shines no light on the upper waves,
Save the dim, chill light of the distant
stars!"

And the song was heard as the wan moon
sank

In a sea-fog's black and fatal bank—
And a fair ship's sails were seen no more
In the moonlight space where they shone
before.

POOR MAD KATHERINE.

I HAVE waited long for his homeward
boat,

For the sound of his far sea-bugle note,
While I wear the locket his lips have
kissed—

But I see him not, through the blinding
mist!

Say not he has left me here alone
To list to the wild waves' hopeless moan!
Ye are cruel and false and deceivers all—
I shall listen still for his evening call!

No other on earth shall take his place,
For the love of a true heart never dies;
I *will* not look in a lover's face,
Till I gaze once more in my sailor's eyes!

Oh, love of my youth, come back again!
Ah, let not my prayers for thee be vain!
Come back to my longing arms once more,
Let thy boat's-keel grate on the shingly
shore.

A faithful lover, *they say*, is new!
Yet I *know*, mine own, *thy* heart is true;
That heart will keep what thy lips have
said,
No treachery at *thy* hands I dread!

They tell me a lover soon forgets,
Ere the sun that rises, sinks and sets;
That the eyes of the day are all to him,
That the eyes of the past full soon grow
dim.

Yet others shall never take his place,
For the love of a true heart never dies!
Nor *will* I look in a lover's face,
Till I gaze once more in my sailor's eyes!

THE BOLD MARINER.

O MARINER bold! thou art young and
strong

And little thou fearest the depths
beneath;

And yet would I pray thee, think—How
long

Could thy puny strength wage war with
death?

I know that the skies are blue and fair,
And the waves dance under thy merry
boat,

And the breeze is soft as a maiden's hair—
And yet! how long shalt thou keep
afloat?

That well-trained ear, can it catch no moan
From the sullen caves that thy boat
glides past?

Dost thou hear the break of the waves
alone—

No whisper yet of a coming blast?

And hast thou the power to prophesy
How long may the west winds lull the
deep?

How soon shall the tempests veil the sky,
And the stormy petrels wake from sleep?

A blast may come like a lion's roar,
And lash the waves to an angry white,
Until they rush on the rocky shore
Like savage foes, in a maddened fight!

Go back! go back! from the hot dull sky
Forewarning comes of a certain fate,
And surely speaks, in the south wind's
sigh,
Of a storm that now but *lies in wait!*

And ah! when the dreaming world shall
wake,

Thy sorrowing friends may find thee not,
While the idle waves of the ocean break
O'er thy unknown corpse in an unblest
spot.

And the winds may moan and the winds
may sigh,

When weary of fierce lament or weeping,
But never shall tear from thy lover's eye,
Fall down on the grave where thou art
sleeping!

OH! THOU GREAT WORLD!

OH! thou great world, so weirdly still and
calm,

How is it thou dost speak not to my
heart?

How is it that thy silence brings no balm—
That earth hath often in thy peace no
part?

And have thy breakers, O thou mighty
ocean!

No other echoes, save thy ceaseless
moans—

No other voices, but the ceaseless motion
Of waves upon eternal granite stones!

Call there no spirits from the depths
below,

No mild reproaches for thy deeds of old,
No wail of bitter, never-ending woe—

Art thou for ever restless, cruel and
cold!

Yet there are echoes from thy granite
rocks,

The shores that have Creation's earliest
mark,

Whose stones receive thy still recurrent
shocks,

In sunlight—moonlight— or mysterious
dark

We are, at last, like thee—we never rest;—
Our very prayers for peace we know are
vain;

Even as thy billows lift each foaming crest,
So do we toil—and evermore complain!

GOD GUARD OUR SAILORS.

("GOD GUARD THE SAILORS ON THE
DEEP BLUE SEA.")

I STOOD beside the ocean, and my gaze
Looked outward to a filmy line of ships,
Now fading in the twilight's purple haze,
But followed by the prayers of many
lips.

"God guard the sailors on the deep blue
sea"

Came from a little prattler at my side,*
Nor could a simple prayer more touching
be

Beside the beating waters of the tide.

Ah! danger broods not only on the deep—
Not always to the blighted, but the fair;
It cometh in the very rest of sleep—
It followeth on the very words of prayer.

The bird that builds its nest beneath the
eaves

Of homes o'er which the peaceful smoke-
cloud curled,

Or midst a lonely forest's tenderest leaves,
Is scarce more safe than we are in the
world!

* Harry T — ; his father was at sea.

Life is a mist-cloud in the path of death,
That skeleton that guards our brightest
ways—

Or as a puff of smoke—a fleecy breath,
That mingles with the shadows as we
gaze.

For death is here and there and every-
where;

And if he seeks the dwellings of the old,
So, also, lays his hand upon the fair,
And on the earliest lambkin of the fold.

And at the closing of each toiling day,
In hours alike, of sorrow, pain, or mirth,
How humbly, wisely, still our lips may
pray,
God guard us all—both on the sea and
earth!

THE EVERLASTING SEA.

THE moaning of the centuries-weighted
sea—

The echoes of the countless restless
waves,
Keeping the secrets of Eternity—
The secrets of the world's mysterious
graves—

Oh! but to be a mermaid for a while—
One of a bevy of fair ocean girls!
To rest upon a glowing coral pile,
Or on the dazzling shelly beds of pearls!

To read the secrets—searched for, still by
man—

That, while unknown, he ever craves to
know!
The past, the future, of Creation's plan,
The stories of the unknown lives below!

There's nothing new on earth, as some will
say—

No more to find, on plain, on hill, on
beach—

There's nothing more to learn of modern
day;

Yet what if it be placed beyond our
reach!

What if a myriad secrets yet may rest
Still unrevealed, and yet that man shall
learn,

Full of strong meanings, man hath never
guessed!

Only—the time is not!—Each in its
turn!

So through the centuries of the past 'tis
seen

That one by one earth's treasures are
revealed—

And—for the secrets of the deep, I ween,
Yet many rest that have not been un-
sealed!

MUSINGS OF A SEA MIST.

"I KNOW not—I—who am a fleeting mist,
That now the sky and now the waves have
kissed—

I know not—I—but, to myself, I seem
The phantom of some pale, unhappy
dream.

"And sometimes, like a wearied ghost, I
creep

Along the dull green surface of the deep,
And then I rest awhile, or, with a sigh,
Pass out into the distant wastes to die.

"Had I, ere earth was old, a strong
young form,
Not ever chill, like death, but sentient-
warm?

Have I not touched a maiden's tender face,
And had I movement full of love and
grace—?

"Oh! many come to my embrace, as I
Sleep in the heavy curtains of the sky—
And hear not, in the dull, unhappy air,
Until too late, the cries of their despair!

"Am I so vile that I must ever cling
To earth's sad seas as an accursed thing?
To lie in winding-sheets upon the plain,
So he who strays shall not return again?

"Here comes the fierce north wind! now
must I flee,
And hide me in some cavern of the sea—
While bearing all I pass to some safe
grave
Beneath the shadow of the sullen wave!"

THE UNKNOWN SEA- MONSTERS.

FORMS that are fashioned in no modern
clay,
That were grotesque, or hideous, in *our*
day,
Under the waters many fathoms deep,
Through the long centuries of our globe
may sleep!

Mysterious denizens of some weird track
That lies beneath the ocean—sending back
No echo to those higher realms of earth,
Where creatures of our regions have their
birth—

Grim monsters modern eyes have never
known,
Hatched in vast caverns of primeval stone,
That ever have been and that yet may
be,
From our own centuries to eternity—

Strange, eyeless fish, that never see the
light
Of sun, or moon, or stars—in which the
night
Is life alone, and theirs the only graves
That lie beneath the dull, the silenced
waves

Truly, what lengths in monster coils yet
curled
May rest in ghastly corners of the world,
With hues no human eyes have ever
viewed,
With powers, undreamt of yet by us,
endued!

Strange beings, that had lived before the
Flood,
May sport beneath the very ships that
scud,
With cold indifference, or calm unbelief,
O'er endless plains, or vales, of coral reef.

Fierce whirlpools, to whose depths we have
no clue,
Have met the mariner's affrighted view,
And warned him that there may be things
below
Of which himself and comrades nothing
know.

And where unknowing of *our* night or
day,
Or change of season, it may be that they
In darkest haunts of that strange, un-
known shore
Live their mysterious lives for evermore—

Live in a world of an unwritten page,
Live in a world of an eternal age,
A life that shall for evermore be strange,
A life that knows rotation not, nor change.

O thou, to our philosophy, dost seem
The evil shadow of some monstrous
dream—
An unrevealed and ghastly universe,
One branded by an everlasting curse!

'TIS TRUE, O! GLORIOUS SEA!

'Tis true, O glorious sea! I never weary
Of thy great storms, nor of thy silver
calm—
To me thy boundless reach is never
dreary;
Its breadth hath something full of rest
and balm.

Thou art so fathomless—unchanged—un-
tamed—
With such unstinted strength at thy com-
mand—
An universe that cannot be reclaimed,
Or even abased—that evermore is grand.

Thou can'st not, like thy sister earth, be
robbed
Of any of thy width, or of thy powers—
That strong and mighty head of thine
hath throbb'd
Not more in early than in later hours.

Thy face, although so distant, yet can tell
Of stars that rise and set into thy deep—
As fearful in thy rage as darkest Hell,
Yet sometimes even more dreaded in thy
sleep.

Yes! even as when by God's hand first
designed,
A myriad secrets hidden in thy breast!
Ruled only by the seasons and the wind,
And mocking these—when in thy FROZEN
REST!

AN UNNATURAL NOONTIDE.*

DARKNESS is falling!

A strangely heavy and mysterious frown—

One hears the sea-birds to each other calling,

As slowly sweeps the wide-spread mantle down.

Earth is no more!

Nor is there sign or sound of the great deep;

There is no light on the encircling shore
Nor from the towns that cluster near its sweep.

Ah! still more strange

It is to feel the *deadness* of the hour!

There seems no will in life, to move or change,

Both winds and waves alike have lost their power.

Yes—Earth is blotted out,

As by the spell of some mysterious will—

Only a dense, dull vapour floats about,
As though a giant shape of unknown ill!

Man—a past dream

Appears—for there is neither sound nor light—

A phantasy through which no planets gleam,

Lost in the doom of a perpetual night!

AN UNHAPPY SPIRIT.

THERE, where the ocean rocks are ruined and high,

And shut from all the brightness of the sky,
Where even the stormy petrel's mournful scream

Would rarely break upon a poet's dream—

There, where one hears the moaning of the waves

Re-echo in the dark, mysterious caves,
She used to wander—with her wistful gaze
Full of the pathos of departed days.

And once she wandered out, nor came again

To seek her home—and search, alas! was vain;

The sea-weeds caught and braided her long hair,

The sea-gulls heard her last cry of despair.

Yet when the heavy evening mists arise,
Or the pale moon rides through the midnight skies,

They say she paces still the treacherous sands,

With hair dishevelled—wringing her pale hands—

They tell us that they hear, amidst the moans

Of the sad waves, a mourner's piteous tones,

Now but a wail, then rising to a cry—

Yet one that echoes not from shore nor sky.

But when the midnight's sombre hours have passed,

And when the northern sky is overcast,

And moon and stars the darkening waves have kissed,

She fades and floats away upon the mist!

For it is told that, underneath the water,
Lies one who had betrayed her, long ago—

And she will sing at night the songs he taught her,

When the sad stars are dim—the moon sinks low;

For, maddened by foul treachery and despair,

She once had lured her lover to the shore—
That through her own wild deed he lieth there,—

So shall she wail and weep for evermore!

THE SOLITARY WANDERER.

BESIDE the stream where lily-buds lie sleeping,

The stream o'er which the willow boughs are weeping,

I wander as a spirit, tempest-tossed—

Forsaken by the world—abandoned—lost!

* A fog so intense that you could not distinguish your hand when held before your face!

Would that my spirit could but rest as thou
 Restest upon the water—willow-bough!
 Would that I so might slumber evermore,
 Or till the tumult of this world is o'er!

"Forget-me-nots" bloom brightly on thy
 bank,
 And cuckoo-flowers, and nettles tall and
 rank—
 And in that spot of solitude and rest
 The songless water-wagtail builds its nest.

Thou peaceful stream! I would that I
 could sleep
 Where the tall shadows of thy poplars
 creep
 Across yon ripples, dyed with sunset's red—
 Still as the cold bright pebbles in thy bed!

Ah me! there is no rest in this sad world;
 The stormy stream whereon our hopes are
 hurled,
 As sadly we look downwards, we may see
 Carry them on to the tumultuous sea!

FAR TO THE DISTANCE.

FAR to the distance steals the lonely sea,
 Returning ever to its native shore;
 Unlike the lessons of this life, for we
 Shall pass away, returning never more.

The leaf that falls in Autumn's dreamy
 haze,
 The flower that dies upon the frost-
 bound plain,
 The cloud that veils the moonlight as we
 gaze,
 All these, yea! all—the present earth
 reclaim.

The corn that ripens on the harvest fields,
 When myriad ears by whispering winds
 are sued,
 The purple fruits that generous nature
 yields,
 These bloom and die—again to be
 renewed.

The swallow, flitting from the cottage
 eaves,
 Yet re-appears when winter storms are
 o'er,

The buds re-open all their tender leaves—
 We pass away, returning never more!

Our youth is beautiful and full of bloom,
 Our riper age at times is rich and
 blessed;
 Our later steps but take us to the tomb,
 Wherein we lie in silence and at rest!

STILL—THROUGH THE WATCHES OF THE NIGHT.

STILL through the darker "Watches of the
 Night,"
 When beacons fail to glimmer o'er the
 deep,
 When stars conceal in mists their guiding
 light,
 When tempests o'er the troubled waters
 sweep—

His thoughts return to that sweet, homely
 bower,
 Wherein dwells one he loves, silent and
 sad—
 Watching the passing of each lagging hour,
 In sober thoughts, in sober raiments
 clad.

And still he lingers, as the pale stars
 wane,
 And on the sands he seems to see her
 stroll,
 Full of a sweet and melancholy pain,
 While at her feet the billows break and
 roll.

Shall he return, to find the same sweet
 eyes,
 Shall he return, to find the same warm
 heart,
 Glowing with the true love that never dies,
 Faithful for ever, so no more they part?

So shall he watch and hope, and sigh and
 think,
 And pray that love, through all, be
 faithful still;
 The waves can answer not; the sad stars
 sink
 Into the shadows, and the night grows
 chill.

AN INCIDENT IN HIS LIFE—NO MORE!

AND OTHER POEMS.

INTRODUCTION.—LONG, WILLOWY FORMS.

LONG, willowy forms, robed in lack-lustre
grey,
With eyes whose glances fill but with
despair—
With eyes that have a weird, unholy
stare—
Come to us with the fading of the day.

Their gaze on us is ever coldly fixed,
And, once encountered, thou shalt not
forget—
It pierces even the very soul, and yet
With human sympathy is all unmixed.

For something sad and dark do they
recall—
(Although they speak not, neither do
they move)—
The ghastly shadows of a form of love,
That sleeps beneath the grim funereal pall.

The past is with them, in that hideous
form—
A cold and icy breath our marrow
chills—
Some horror through our every fibre
thrills,
Like the dull death before a frightful
storm.

No hint—no word of other worlds they tell,
And by their coming nothing more we
know—
From whence their shadows come, nor
whither go—
Or that they are of heaven, or rise from
hell!

INTRODUCTION.—AN INCIDENT IN HIS LIFE—NO MORE!

“An incident in his life—no more!
A little time and the clouds sweep by;
The sun shines out as it shone before,
And life is worthy of scarce a sigh!

“It merits little the artist’s grace,
As little the poet’s sickly song;
’Tis a hopeless, feeble, and idle race,
And its days are the days of wrath and
wrong.

“Let the strong and the bold alone rejoice
In the few bright hours of the fleeting
day.”
So mockingly sings the cynic’s voice,
As we hear him pass on his reckless way.

PARTING.

THE sun had gone down in the land of the
west—
The land that the sons of green Erin love
best—
Not a light on the shore, not a glow on the
hill,
And the voice of the evening was tenderly
still!

Two stood in the shade of the cliff-bounded
shore,
They glanced not around them—above, nor
before,—
Both youthful in form and both handsome
in face;
Yet the girl of long weeping showed many
a trace!

"Must you leave me, my dear one?" she said; "must we part, O light of my life, and O heart of my heart!"

Must the sun set for ever, for me, on this shore—

Shall I hear the dear sound of thy footsteps no more?"

He kissed the tears falling from Cedra's sweet eyes;

"There is one thing, my dear one," he said, "*never dies!*—

Never dims, never sets, and can know no decline;

And that is, my Cedra, the love that is thine!

"Oh, try, for *my* sake, to bear lightly each day

Of that long, dreary time I must needs be away;

Would—*would* that my fate, sweet, for ever might be,

Where those eyes might shine brightly, and only—*for me!*

"O Cedra, my darling—one kiss—nay!—no sigh!

Ah! why will these moments so ruthlessly fly!

But alas! and alas!—we must linger no more—

Ah! Cedra! *my* Cedra! . . ."

The parting is o'er!

Still Cedra sits silent and sad by the sea, More sad, *some* might think, than a young heart *need* be,

Who have ne'er felt that grief, oft too bitter for tears,

Of a lover's last farewell—of parting for years!

Oh! sorrow hath power to prolong each sad day,

And to make even the summer sky chilly and grey;

And indeed they *were* years, almost centuries, *in pain*,

Ere they met on those shores of the ocean again!

MEETING AGAIN.

Ah, evening of Autumn! so glorious of hue!

So rich in thy gold and so bright in thy blue!

And yet there is something of sadness, the while,

That ever seems mixed with thy beautiful smile.

A feeling of anguish still breathes through thy glow,

A longing for something we find not below,

That tells us thy light is not *all* that we need,

While the tired eyes are dim and the worn hearts may bleed!

So muses one—sadly—whose slow footsteps mark

Long levels of sand, as the evening grows dark,

While the calm waters glow in the last golden lines

Of the west—growing less as the red sun declines.

And the sea-gull's white wings in her eyes oft are glancing,

As they skim o'er the waves, the green waves, that are dancing

So cheerily still in the smile of that sky,

As Cedra walks on, with a heart-broken sigh.

"O love! my lost love! shall we meet never more?

Hast thou gone—*without me*—to the far, unknown shore?

And did'st thou forget it was cruel—was unkind,

At the least, to have left me in sorrow behind?

"Ah—dreary and dark through the days of my grief,

In one thing is ever, my dear one, relief—For I know that no other hath stolen thy heart,

That Death, and Death only, could tear us apart."

Yet she sighed as she brushed the hot tear-drops away,

And she looked at the shadows, now pallid and grey,

Fast shrouding the ocean,—as, softly and light,

Came the footsteps of *three*, through the swift-growing night.

And the moon's gentle rays lit a face—long ago

She had thought the most fair that her vision could know;

Yet *he*—saw her not! and he heard not her cry—

As a child, by its mother, went merrily by.

"O father!—'tis late—I must go home to bed—!"

The little one, prattling in passing her, said;

And he turned as it spoke—

So their eyes met once more,
Yet never—ah! never to meet as before—!

For only a look, a wild look, as of shame,
O'er the face that met Cedra's own wasted one came;

Then she fell on the sands, ere a word could be said—

Ah, woe to the living! but—*peace to the dead!*

AFTERWARDS.

"*Ah*, Edwin—*how dreadful!*" his wife said that night,

As she brushed out those "tresses," nor rippling, nor bright!

"How sad and how sudden! a face, too so fair;

And oh! with such *glorious* wavelets of hair!—

"'Tis shocking, indeed, in a moment to die,

Without even time for a prayer—for a sigh!
I wonder, *don't you*, what her story could be?—

Though truly, 'tis nothing to you—nor to me—

"Yet, there must be *something*, one fancies, to tell,—

Some record of loss—of despair—or of blight—

Or treatment of *treachery* even—ah—well!
Sleep now—and sleep fast—it is late, dear!
—*Good night!*"

Sleep now and sleep fast!—shall he e'er sleep again?

Will his prayers for forgiveness—oblivion—be vain?

Will she come in the night, with her sighs and her tears,
And torture his soul, through the long, coming years?

Will she gaze into his—with her eyes full of pain,

Till madness—grim madness—shall seize on his brain—

Although ne'er again in the morn to unclose,

In the *midnight* to leave him no hour of repose?

Yet when morning came,—with the morning's bright beams,

He looked on the thoughts of the night but as dreams—

And arose from his couch, not to weep, nor to pray,

But to tramp, as before, in the world's busy way!

Unwilling to meditate—even to give
One thought to the past—for the day only live!

To enjoy each bright moment of life as it came,

And trample on aught that brought sorrow or shame!

For this was his creed, and it suited him well!

As all may perceive in the tale that we tell—

Oh! yesterday's sorrows for ever are passed,

And life is too brief to be fretting—at last!

A MURMUR AND ITS REBUKE.

In the lone forests, as the sun sinks down,
In the dark forests, where the leaves are brown—

Where the green crickets chirrup as I pass,
I wander — weary — through the tangled grass.

Across the shadows of the plains and fields,
Among the fruits and flowers that Autumn yields,

I listen to the cowherd's echoing call,
And watch the mists of evening as they fall.

Oh! leave the world and its tumultuous crowd!

Come where the earth's last voice is sweet
—not loud—

And under sombre reaches of the sky
Feel as I feel—how sweet it were to die!

Yes! come where the long shadows cross
the fields,

Where the sweet meadow all its fragrance
yields,

And where the wailing voice of earth's
despair

Shall torture not the listening, twilight
air.

Here we will rest—the world will miss us
not—

Each fretful o'er his own too troubled lot;
Here echo not the world's upbraiding
cries,—

Despair is calm, and stills her very sighs!

* * * * *

“Look up! the sun, that now shall sadly
set,

The world may leave, yet not that world
forget;

Watch! hopeless wanderer, again its days
Will bring thee brighter skies and happier
rays.

“Go to thy chamber—not to moan, but
sleep,

For there are times for rest, as times to
weep;

Only for passing hours that shadow falls,
When heavy darkness thy weak soul
appeals!”

OTHER WORLDS; OR, STAR- GAZING.

No. I.

WOULD that we were one of a spirit-band,
That we might visit thy all unknown
seas,

And wander, O ye stars! o'er some strange
land,

Shaded, perchance, by groves of giant
trees.

Dwell therein souls filled with mysterious
thought?

Look they into sweet eyes of newer
light?—

Of light, through which our minds are yet
untaught—

Have they *our* sun by day, *our* moon
by night?

Live they on plains, or in huge granite
courts,

Formed of the untrimmed world around
them spread?

What are their labours? what may be their
sports?

What *do* they for the living—with the
dead?

How read they laws of the great universe,
The change of seasons, climates, rush of
storms?

Are these to them a blessing or a curse?
Have they themselves grotesque or
human forms?

Is life as often meagre? and have those
Who people these strange climes *our*
narrow creeds—

Bear *theirs* a likeness to *our* human woes?
Nay! have they our rapacity — our
greeds?

Do they plead guilty to “attain” by
Force?

And is it there, as here, that Might is
Right?

And suffering souls esteemed a thing of
course,

As clouds the sunlight follow—day the
night?

Ah, speculations! that the mind have
crossed,

And vexed, by their fatuity, the brain—
Wild fantasies, in which the mind is lost—
Strange, shifting, fascinating, and *as*
vain!

OTHER WORLDS; OR, STAR- GAZING.

No. II.

LIGHTS of that vault divine,
Where mortal enters never!

Stars that so calmly shine,
Stars that shall shine for ever.—

With longing, lifted eyes,
In the soft, summer night,—
Pigmies beneath the skies,
We gaze upon thy light.

Lost in the mystic dreams
Of land no man explores,
We watch the fitful beams
That come from unknown shores.

Lights of that vault divine,
Where mortal enters never!
Stars that so calmly shine,
Stars that shall shine for ever.—

Who each may be an earth
Of rude primeval stone—
A world whereon the birth
Of man is yet unknown!

Nay! man may *never* know
What thou hast unrevealed;
To us, who dwell below,
Thy mysteries shall be sealed!

Lights of that vault divine,
Where mortal enters never!
Stars that so calmly shine,
Stars that shall shine for ever!*

OTHER WORLDS; OR, STAR- GAZING.

NO. III.

TRULY—one can but marvel what shall be,
Ye stars! thy future in Creation's plan!
In the great vistas of Eternity—
Those wondrous ages yet unread by
man!

Yes! who is it that dwells upon thy shores?
What seas are those that break upon
thy sands?

What forest that no step, perchance, ex-
plores!

How spread the skies that light thine
unknown lands?

Have ye, as some declare, no sound! no
life!

No human passions and no human
cries?

Are there no wars—no echoes of the strife
That in our regions rend the very skies?

Have ye no roses?—oh! are there no seeds
Of joy implanted—none of death—of
birth?

No fruits that ripen, and no poison-weeds—
Are ye, in *all* these things—unlike our
earth?

Are there no lips that smile—no hearts that
bleed?

Is there no laughter—neither bitter tears?
Ah! worlds mysterious—none of us may
read

The secrets thou hast kept for myriad
years!

Yet—oft one stands to marvel—what may
be

Ye stars! thy future in Creation's plan!
In the great vistas of Eternity—
Those wondrous ages yet unread by
man!

THE BLUE MOON.†

O YELLOW moon, of whom our poets sang,
Hast thou, then, altered thy fair face of
old?

Now as a *cheese*, in a *pink* sky to hang!
A *Stilton* cheese—all covered with blue
mould!

No more the calm Diana—cold and white,
Learning—not chastity—we know, is *blue*;
Love can no longer songs to thee indite,
And truly was no thing *Minerva* knew!

Alas! for eyes that upward turn to thee
For inspiration, by the sullen sea!

Alas! for those that think to breathe of
love,

By yellow beams that light the beech-wood
grove!

* It has been "*proved*," we believe, that no human life is possible upon the stars. It has often also been "*proved*" that man has made a little error in his "*calculations*"!

† A brilliant pink mist, alternating with mauve, was noticed from the pine-woods near Bournemouth, hanging over the sea, just after sunset on December 5th, 1883, through which the moon appeared to be of a most beautiful and delicate *blue* colour. This singular phenomenon was noticed also at Eastbourne, Margate, and elsewhere, as stated in the *Times* of the following morning.

Why hast thou, O Diana! tell us *why*—
 Lost thy fair bow, so long seen in our
 sky?
 And now look only through those same
 beech trees
 Again to just remind one of a *cheese*!

Romance hath left the world, some fools
 have cried;
 Yet still we hoped she might at least
 abide
 By *thee*, and by thy horns of silver hold!
 And not *by* thee, be turned out in the
 cold!

WHIMS!

NATURE is sometimes whimsical of plan!
 Amidst the herds *one* elephant is white—
 The ugly duckling turns into a swan—
 A black rose yet may shock the florist's
 sight!

Blue moons,* red suns, and other little
 matters,
 Just slightly changed from "fixed ideas"
 may seem,
 An ugly woman *sometimes* herself flatters
 She is as lovely as a fairy dream.

For Nature cares not for *our* feelings—
 she
 Hath thousand forms of weeds as well
 as flowers—
 And in one human family you see
 Varieties beyond description's powers!

One is a genius, and the others fools;
 One is refined, the rest are coarse of
 grain;
 Some boldly act, the others serve as tools;
 The one is modest, and the others vain.

Some, of weak minds, will even assume to
 trace
 A likeness where no likeness e'er exists;
 The frog could never be of bovine race;
 The wheat and rye are still of different
 grists!

THE WORLD OF THE PAST;

OR,

HIEROGLYPHICS.

Books of the past, strange books that none
 may read,
 Whose characters shall no man now
 translate—
 Symbols, perchance, of some undreamt-of
 creed,
 Records of criminals, or of the great.—

Would we could comprehend—could lift
 the veils
 Through which, as yet, no eyes of ours
 can peer—
 Decipher all those strange and old-world
 tales—
 The hero's, tyrant's, or the god's career.

Something we know, but strangely little
 yet,
 Of cycles that went round so long before
Our time, when the red sun of Eden set,
 Or the pale moon rose on Phœnicia's
 shore.

Strange periods of an unformed world hast
 thou
 So briefly chronicled — dim, mystic
 ages!—
 Neither of whose commencement, nor
 whose close,
 Can we the story tell in later pages.

What were the paths then trodden—what
 the laws?
 What were the orders of the night—the
 day?
 What was the progress? what the march
 of wars?
 To what strange gods or idols did they
 pray?

Ah! but of tongues so lost, of worlds so
 strange
 They never now could wear an aspect
 true!
 All things are made to pass away, or
 change;
 The old world fades away into the new!

* Blue moons and the white elephant were subjects of much interest in the year 1883.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW OF SHISHAK!

"EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES.—At the last meeting of the Society of Biblical Antiquities Mr. Lund read a paper . . . identifying Joseph's Pharaoh, under whom the seven years' famine took place, with Amenhotop IV., the Disk-worshipping zealot and reformer, at the close of the 18th dynasty . . . He stated that Queen Tsi-nu-Keb was a mother-in-law of Shishak."—*Times*, June 14th, 1882.

O MOTHER-IN-LAW of Shishak! what wert thou
In those far days that seem so wondrous now?
Wert thou a *typical* old mother-in-law?
Did'st thou inspire with ridicule or awe?

O Mother-in-law of Shishak! wert thou rude?
As *some* have found those of your kind—
a shrewd
And managing, advising, fierce old dame;
Or wert thou but a mother-in-law in *name*?

O Mother-in-law of Shishak! harsh in feature
And form, wert thou—the well-known,
bent old creature—
Shrill in thy voice and shrewish in thy ways,
Like many a mother-in-law of "latter days"?

And yet the mother-in-law of long ago
Might not have been the mother-in-law
some know;
Neither obstructive, vain, suspicious—nor
Determined that *her* will should be the law!

Not crammed with vanity! so slighting others
Of her own kind—the "type" of those
called mothers—
In-law, as we have said, and but the bubble
Of love, but still—a *necessary* trouble!—

Maintaining none *could* be so wise as she!
None others *half* so rich in wisdom be!
That wisdom that some swear belongs to age,
Even when but lines of folly fill its page!

O Mother-in-law of Shishak! wert thou grim
Of fancy—treating passion as a whim,—
And seeking less to *practise* than to
preach,
And loving not to learn, but yet to *teach*!

O Mother-in-law of Shishak! thou hast slept
For countless years the sleep that is so fast;
Nor can we learn who with thee laughed
or wept,
However long we muse upon the past.

So rest in peace, wrapt in the mists of Time,
Touched by the hand that all things blots
or sears;
And with thee also rest such joys or crimes
As might have been thine own in those
strange years.

Yes! Mother-in-law of Shishak, rest in peace!
Thy cares, thy virtues, and thy joys unknown;
Even those who muse upon thy Past will
cease,
Ere long, to have a Present of their own!

GOING BACK!

"There were still to be seen the old mines, which our early ancestors sank, to obtain the flint * * * (of which they made tools). * * The date of the mines could not be less than 4,000."—Lectures by Mr. SKERCHLY, at the London Institution."—*Times*, Nov. 20th, 1883.

FOUR thousand years! A reckoning long
for some of us!

What wondrous incidents *could* the earth
have told
Of the past, though "dark" as to what'll
become of us!
She *might* tell of days when man was
scarce so old!

Have you *all* this time been learning your
lessons? Truly,
Old World, you *have* been at it many a
day!
You were either a "dunce," methinks, or
proved "unruly,"
Since you still are simply an idiot, as
some say!

Still food for our laughter—as the “*wise*” describes!—

And an “ignorant, feeble” creature for his pains!

Still a subject fitted for mockery and for gibes,

And so, at his “easy lessons” he remains!

May we hope that in the *next* four thousand years

He will *something* learn of the way “how things are done”!

How and *why* the Planets keep to their proper *spheres*!—

And the “little ways” of the Earth, the Moon, the Sun!

Yes! not *too* quick in “acquiring” is *this* boy!

Though ever and ever to his tasks returning,

Nor idly given his good books to destroy,
But a *trifle asinine*—some cry—in learning!

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.

NO. I.

HISTORY repeats itself! its very banners

Are often, in devices, still the same,
Though men may alter, in their dress and manners,

And nations take a newer-sounding name.

History repeats itself—and still we hear

The shouts of war; and though, perchance, the forms

May change, yet the like passions re-appear,

And now, as ever, calm will follow storms.

History repeats itself—in light and shade
Alike — though swords replace the poisoned dart

And spear; and man no longer be arrayed
In mail, yet carries he as bold a heart!

History repeats itself—and war is still
As cruel, bloodthirsty, as in former times,

Evinces, as before, the same strong will,
Urged often by ambition into crimes.

History repeats itself—and still we read
Of barbarous manhood's fury and despair,*

And heroes fight for right, and heroes bleed—

The same black sins, high virtues proved,
are there.

History repeats itself—nor is it wise
To think this world so all unlike the last—

Events to reckon with prejudging eyes,
To dream the age of greed and hate is past.

History repeats itself—and those that see
Such wondrous changes in Earth's *modern* man,

Have but the visions of fatuity,
Nor read the history of Creation's plan.

History repeats itself—be thou prepared
To help, as ever, all that are oppressed;
Thy soul in earnest, and thy right arm bared,

Thy keen sword ready, even if at rest!

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.†

NO. II.

HISTORY repeats itself—the roar of war
Sounds, as in distant centuries, from afar;
The glare of conflagrations lights the sky
As in the times of Troy—long years gone by.

The brutal pillage and the streets of slain,
War—with all hideous customs in its train,
Unchanged in all its ghastly forms, and still

With all war's reckless consequence of ill.

* Remember the accounts in the daily papers at the time of the destruction of Alexandria.

† The War in Egypt was taking place when this was written.

He who the page of History hath perused,
Will see the serpent's head is still un-
bruised;

Man's tiger nature to the front once more,
Fighting the fight as it hath fought before.

History repeats itself—in looking back
We, shuddering, see in its wild blood-
stained track

The evils reproduced of times long past,
As though the ancient moulds had been
recast!

History repeats itself—if man hath changed
The rôle in some things, others modified,
In all events o'er which the eye hath ranged
Is seen the same stern vengeance—death-
less pride.

History repeats itself, and thus we read
How courage, faith, and strength are put
to strain,

And men will bear and fight, and men will
bleed,
The noblest details also found again.

History repeats itself—nor have we failed
This fact to state, and yet—once more—
restate,

As knowledge that might often have
availed,

Had not our eyes perceived it but too late!

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.

No. III.

(Impromptu lines, on hearing of the banquet to be given to the Medical Officers on their return from the Egyptian Expedition. Written to be read at the dinner.)

THEY come back to their native land,
Their brows are crowned with glorious
bays;

And if a small, « noble band,
One that the poorest heart shall praise.

They cared not, they, for any foe,
So they might succour the distressed;
Enough! when war's fierce hand laid low,
Their hands brought kindness, comfort,
rest!

They heard the battle's mighty roar,
The cannon pealing o'er the land;
To them its echoes meant no more
Than to the bravest of the band.

Not for the warrior's wreath they burned,
Torn from the cold brows of the slain;
And if they turned, they only turned
To soothe a sufferer's dying pain.

Oh! theirs shall be a noble story,
Whose echoes envy shall not drown;
And they shall share the soldier's glory,
Though other gems adorn their crown!

"DARK PAGES";

OR,

A STRANGE REMEMBRANCE.

No. I.

HE came to us on one calm summer night,
He came with many, as an honoured
guest;

We sat and talked, beneath the pale moon-
light—

Somewhat we were apart from all the
rest.

That moonlight smiled upon a youthful
face,
And on a white, not *seeming-cruel*
hand!

Yet was he one accursèd in Life's race,—
A truth that still seems hard to under-
stand!

He spoke, as we can now recall too well,
Of all Life's vicious greed and hate and
lust;

He spoke of what he called a festering
Hell,

That lay, concealed, beneath the
thinnest crust.

And we, admitting much of crime and
grief,

Much known and more, it might be, still
to know,

Yet held, and yet held firmly, a belief
That virtue—courage—had wide homes
below.

We told him we had often fought that
fight;

Yes! even with our own sex, of later
days,*

Yet still we held that *our* belief was right,
That much of glory shone amidst earth's
ways.

He only listened, with a blighting smile,
And said ours was a "*theory*," one long
past!

That we might be deceived one little
while,

Only to learn the bitter truth, at last!

And thus he sat and talked, unhappy man!
For he, though yet in manhood's early
flower,

Concealed within his breast, a ghastly
plan,

Which he went forth to execute—*that*
hour!

"DARK PAGES";

OR,

A PERVERTED MIND.

NO. II.

"I could not stoop *so low* * * as to try to save
myself; as others did."—Letter to his wife, from one
of the murderers of Mr. Burke (in Phoenix Park) just
before his execution.—*Standard* newspaper, May
19th, 1883.

THOU could'st not stoop so low!—thou
who hast stooped

To break Heaven's mighty law, "Thou
shalt not kill"!

Nay, even Charity's sweet head had
drooped

To know such sophistry thy heart could
fill!

Thou could'st not stoop so low!—thou who
hast taken

In face of Heaven, a life He placed
below;

Could no strong trumpet-tones thy soul
awaken,

And teach thee the first lessons man
must know?

Thou could'st not stoop so low! What!
when thy hand,

Defying Heaven—as with an impious
oath—

Hath taken another life from Life's own
land,

Acting the judge, and then the slayer—
both!

Yes! dared decide, *thyself*, if man should
live

Upon this earth, whom Heaven hath
planted there!

And who, in thy most cruel haste, would
give

No moment here, or for defence or
prayer!

Some call a human being a poor worm,
And other civil names that may apply!

But "perverse generation" seems a term
Fully as fitting as in days gone by!

May 20th, 1883.

"DARK PAGES";

OR,

LAYS OF A TROUBLED LAND.

NO. III.

THOU Frankenstein of discontent and
crime,

What doth thy shadow in our modern
light?

What evil hope is this, that, in *our* time,
Leads thee to venture from thy realm of
night?

Dark as the plumage of a raven's wing,
Thy shadow hath no variance in its
gloom;

Thou art as loathsome as that evil thing,
The ghoul, whose sweetest feast is of the
tomb.

Thy poets sang of mournful mists of plains,
And moanings of the spirits of the dead;

Not *then* for the most ghastly of all stains
They bade the croon arise—sad tears
be shed!

* "Versus a Woman, Pro Women," which he said he had read, and thought that the author was in the wrong!

The long, weird sobbing, and the hollow
sigh,

That through thy willow trees by night
were heard—

As, through the moonlight, sullen clouds
sweet by—

Only by breezes of the plain were stirred.

Not then the brand of Infamy's own woe,

The stab of the assassin in the dark—

We mourned not *then* for stainless brows
laid low,

For fuel that burned without one noble
spark.

The ghastly shapes that floated on thy mist,
And passed away upon thy lakes and
seas,

If they to echoes of thy days should list,
Must sorrow o'er no darker deeds than
these!

No fire from Heaven, but yet a burning
fire,

Hath singed upon thy brow thy noble
bays;

Yes! hang on willow-boughs thy shadowy
lyre,

Till thou can'st sing the deed of nobler
days!

"DARK PAGES";

OR,

LAYS OF A TROUBLED LAND.

No. IV.

THOU shalt not kill! No sophistry can
alter

This order — plain, direct — without a
flaw!

Let not the preacher, in confusion, falter
In maintenance of this — Heaven's
earliest law.

Thou shalt not kill! no matter what thy
woe;

Thou may'st be judge, and yet not
execute!—

"Anger is madness"—justice calm—not
slow—

Man — even the vilest — is above the
brute!

For, in his darkest deed, thou can'st not
tell

What impulse, not his own, had urged
his hand;

Disease, it may be, of some worn "brain-
cell,"

That God alone, not we, may under-
stand.

Of his Creator's image, we have read,
A thing of mystery, even in his birth,—
Thou can'st not number MAN, as with the
dead

Of other creatures, sent to people Earth!

Thou shalt not kill!—it is alone the God
Who made us who shall have this awful
right;

The footsteps that thy erring brothers trod
May even have — *blindfold* — led them
into night!

Thou shalt not kill!—if there is much of
strain

And toil on earth, man was not born
for peace;

No noble path in life shall be in vain,
But surely win the *order for release!*

"DARK PAGES" OF THE PAST;

OR,

THE VOICE OF OLD.*

AND a sound arose! and the ears that
heard

By the strangest thoughts and fears were
stirred,

And they said that a trumpet's thrilling
note

Seemed over an ancient field to float!

* There was a large green meadow near St. Albans, where a battle of very ancient date was said to have been fought; and it was an old tradition in the neighbourhood that still, on its anniversary, the battle was fought over again by the ghosts of the slain, and that the noise of arms and cries of the wounded could be heard at certain hours of that day and night. But on that very anniversary, being in a house built on that same battle-ground, we listened in vain to hear the battle fought o'er again! It was a calm moonlight, undisturbed by any sound except the hooting of owls that built in the beautiful old ruined abbey!

And a sound arose! through the sky it passed!
 As an echo weird of an old-world blast;
 A cry of terror—a cry of woe
 Through the still air rose from the earth below.

And a sound arose!—on the listening air
 It fell as an echo of despair—
 And the voice was wild, and the voice was strong,
 And it told of oppression, sin, and wrong.

And a sound arose! and the earth once more
 Heard a call it had often heard before—
 In the darker and the earlier times
 Of the world's fierce battles, storms, and crimes.

Oh! the voice that rose, and the voice that fell,
 Was a voice that to man was known too well—
 'Twas the ring of an ancient battle cry
 That pealed through the darkly lurid sky!

EARTH'S "DARK" TALES.

(OLD AND NEW!)

AH! Earth's old tales were full of tragic pain,
 Even when her first and bitter wars were won—
 And Abel fell beneath the blows of Cain,
 And David's broken heart bewailed his son.

Later in history, Charles, the mild and meek,
 Laid down upon the block his weary head:
 And Cromwell's hand laid heavy on the weak,
 And Cromwell's feet strode on with ruthless tread.

Poor Maximilian's gentle queen went wild
 With terror, through a tragedy so sad,
 That even a tyrant's lips had hardly smiled—
 That even a devil's heart were hardly glad.

And lurid lights glared o'er Arabia's sands,
 And Alexandria's fires lit up the sky;
 Her streets and squares o'erflowed with savage bands,
 And men proved they could suffer—dare and die!

Yes! to this very day the old, old story
 Comes to our shores from Egypt's ancient plains,*
 The combats, and the courage, and the glory,
 The cries of anguish, and the trumpet's strains.

The noble and contemptible still blend,
 The calm with storm, and mystery with Light;
 Yet all things fair or terrible shall end,
 And close at last, on earth, in silent night.

"O ERIN! GREEN ERIN!"

OR,

THE IRISHMAN'S FAREWELL TO HIS COUNTRY.

O ERIN! green Erin! fair land of my birth,
 Thou dearest of spots in this wide-spreading earth—
 I leave thy loved rivers and forests for ever,
 All ties with the home of my boyhood I sever!

No longer I'll tramp o'er the bogland and moor,
 To bag the wild game where I've bagged it before—
 No longer I'll climb, with my gun to my shoulder,
 Far up on the hills, where the sport shall be bolder.

No more will I follow the flight of the plover—
 O home of the shamrock, wild rose, and sweet clover,
 How great is thy beauty, how low is thy fame!
 Once remembered with pride, now remembered with shame!

* These lines were written at the time of the War in Egypt.

O Erin, green Erin! in times long gone
by,—
Recalled in these days with a tear and a
sigh—
We were proud of thy place in the world's
mighty stage,
We could boast of bright records in His-
tory's page—

But *now* is thy glory all tarnished and
pale—
Men cry thou art low in Humanity's
scale;*
And so from thy beautiful shores I depart,
With the tears in mine eyes, and one
prayer in my heart—

That Erin may yet, in the days still un-
born,
Uprise as the sun, in the pride of the
morn;
And the unwritten leaves that are left of
her story,
Be leaves rich with honour, with peace and
with glory!

AGAIN, O FAIR HIBERNIA!

AGAIN, O fair Hibernia! when shall come
Thy lyre's sweet music to replace the
drum!

And in the breaking of thy purple morn
Re-echo but the huntsman's cheery horn?

Ah! when shall those bright hours return
again,
When thy calm moon shines over calmer
plain;
And on Lough Neagh's green banks the
poet strays,
To see below the "towers of other days!"†

When through thy woods thy lovers softly
linger,
Watching the twilight's long and growing
finger,
Mark the tall shadows of thy mountain-
heights,
Till they have changed to those of summer
nights.

O fair and sweet Hibernia! what bright
flowers
Bloom on thy hill-sides—in thy forest
bowers!

What fragrant lilies in thy gardens grow,
What sweet wild roses in thy hedges blow!

Ah! he who loves thee nobly, ever prays
For fairer sunlight for thy woods and
bays;

And that by thy rose-covered cottage door
Fair Kathleen in the sunlight sits and
spins once more!

KINDLY REMEMBRANCES OF "GREEN ERIN!"

SHE‡ told me much, in those past happy
days,
Of Erin's "cotters" and their kindly
ways,
And many a quaint and pretty sketch she
took
Of tangled brushwood or of shadowed
nook.

Yes—many a homely scene her pencil
drew;

For many a kindly cottager she knew;
And spoke in works of frank, unstinted
praise

Of their warm, hospitable words and ways.

Of sketches she brought back a varied
store,

Of hill and vale, of wild and gloomy
moor;

And I would envy her that she had been
Through sweet Killarney's vales and woods
of green.

Yes! in those days I longed with her to
go

Through all those scenes she seemed so
well to know—

To gather bog-fruits or the ripe brown
nuts,

Or beg for goat's milk at the goat-herds'
huts!

* Written during a time of troubles in Ireland.

† . . . as the purple sun's declining,
He sees the round towers of other days
In the waves beneath him shining!

MOORE

‡ The late kindly-natured Mrs. Herbert Fordham.

And more—she said that they were always
kind
To strangers—and of warm and grateful
mind;
Ah, friend! an ever-gentle mind had'st
thou—
True charity for ever crowned *thy* brow!

A "DARK" EXPERIENCE!

OR,

THE LOST DOVE.

There was a story told of a lost dove being seen
to fly distractedly about, over a battle-field, in the
time of the Franco-German war, evidently scared
from its nest by the tumult.

O DOVE, fair dove, with the pearly breast,
With the soft-toned voice that speaks of
rest,
Art thou driven forth from thy peaceful
bowers,
To war with the world's unbridled powers?

Ah! timid of soul, what dost thou here,
With thy wings all fluttered, and wild with
fear?
With the dead and the dying piled around,
With the tramp of battle upon the ground!

What dost thou here, thou beautiful bird,
Where the roar of the storms of earth is
heard,
Where arrows of war thy wings may pierce,
Where the very breath of the wind is
fierce?

Go back! go back to thy home once
more,—
Thou hast learnt a lesson unknown before;
Go back, go back, ere it be in vain
To seek for peace in thy home again!

For the wounded deer find not repose,
And a blight shall ruin the beautiful
rose;
And the snowdrop, under the heavy tread
Of the world's rude steps, lies soiled and
dead.

THE OLD HEATH AND ITS "DARK" LEGEND.

In Hertfordshire, this legend, with its unsolved
mystery, was told us in the neighbourhood to which
it belonged.

THE gleaner's evening bell had tolled,
The grey-haired shepherd left the fold,
And pallid stars were looking down
Upon a quiet, old-world town.*
Yet, though the hour grew chill and late,
Two loitered near the convent gate—†
The one a dark-eyed cottage girl,
Whose hair knew neither gem nor pearl,
But beautiful in its rich hue
Above her placid brow was braided;
Whose eyes, of deep and tranquil blue,
By lashes long and dark were shaded;
The other, a fair youth, whose gaze,
Lit with the light of hope's young
days,
Shone with as deep a glow as though
It ne'er had heard of change or woe!

They parted,—for his homeward way,
Led o'er a dreary spot and wild;
It was a dismal scene by day,
Even when the broad, glad sunlight
smiled
On harebell blue, and pink heath flower—
Ah! still more so in such an hour!
It had, in truth, an evil name,
And few at twilight near it came—
Tradition filled the place of old
With forms that made the blood run cold!
That shunned the daylight's open eye
To meet beneath a midnight sky!
The moon had there a sickly look,
Its shades lay heavy on the wold,
The stunted shrubs and bushes shook,
The north wind passed, with breath so
cold—
The partridge from the heathy hill
Sent forth its piercing cry and shrill—
And once, or twice, the curlew's call
Rose wild and sad, but this was all!—
There was no human dwelling near,
The spot was lonely—bleak and drear—

He who was crossing it that night
Had hand as bold and heart as light

* Royston.

† In old times, it was supposed, there was a convent near this ancient "town of a king!"

As knight of old, or buccaneer,
 And yet, though it was scarcely fear,
His spirit even felt subdued
 To feel the ghastly solitude,
 The absence of all human sound,
 The weird-like want of movement round !
 The north wind, with its passing sigh,
 But saddened him—he scarce knew why ;
 And when the owl shrieked, with a start
 The blood rushed wildly to his heart !
 It almost seemed a human shriek,
 And rang so sharply on his ear
 He felt that in a spot so bleak,
 'Twas one that few would choose to
 hear !

The vapour damp that floated o'er
 The heathy hill, the rushy moor,
 Across the sky its veil had spread,
 As one who seeks to shroud the dead.

It was near midnight, when a cry,
 A human voice rang madly by—
 A cry, it seemed, of fear or pain,
 That died, alas ! nor rose again !
 Ah ! who should hear it in that spot
 So wild, that footpath crossed it not !
 Then, not long after, came the sound
 Of hoofs upon the heavy ground—
 Methinks it was a gallant steed
 Whose footsteps rang with such wild
 speed !

O'er slippery heath and steep hill-side
 They clattered madly, and then died—
 Died in the distance—and the rain
 Fell with a sad and sullen sound—
 The fog was sweeping from the plain,
 But darker clouds above it frowned—
 The moon gave but a sickly smile
 From out a heavy, rolling pile
 Of clouds, then veiled herself once more,
 And earth grew darker than before.

Years passed—and near that ill-famed
 scene

The beech and pine grew thick and green ;
 Then afterwards, with axe and spade,
 Labour despoiled it of its shade—
 The ploughman next, with much of toil,
 Turned up the dry and root-bound soil—
 And then, scarce veiled by turf ground,
 A human skeleton he found—
 And whosoever there was laid
 Had met no honest doom, they said !
 But he who once that tale knew well,
 No longer lived that tale to tell.

LOVE'S "DARK" DAYS.

(ANGELINA TO EDWIN !)

FORGIVE ! even for the sake of those sweet
 hours

When we have wandered, at the close of
 day,
 Into a very world of scented flowers,
 And loved and sighed the twilight hours
 away !

Forgive—though I have wronged thee, and
 have wrung

Thy very heart with words of scornful
 pride,
 Upon thy past love trampled, and but flung
 All proffered kindness scornfully
 aside !—

Oh ! yet forgive me, for my head is bowed
 With the dull weight of days that have
 seemed years :

I once was proud—I am no longer proud !
 I see life only through a mist of tears.

Thy heart is grieved, but calm, for thou
 art free

From that dull grief that crushes even
 the strong ;

Torn by injustice though thy heart may be
 Thou wast but wronged—thou hast not
 done the wrong !

Oh ! we have loved too long, too much to
 part,—

It had been easier in an earlier day—
 But *now*—the strongest feelings of my
 heart

Are knit to thine, nor can be torn away !

Full sweet and beautiful our visions were,
 In one bright time, although a time too
 brief—

Ere I had felt one feeling of despair—
 Ere thou had'st known one passing
 thought of grief.

Restore me yet that lost place by thy side,—
 I will walk humbly in thy path, and
 seek

To conquer mine own wilfulness and
 pride,
 And love as deeply, yet with love more
 meek.

Ah, yes, forgive me—even for those sweet hours
 When we have wandered, at the close of day,
 Into a very world of scented flowers,
 And loved and sighed the twilight hours away!

A SIGH—FROM A DEATH-BED;

OR,

A "DARK" PAGE OF LIFE.

"TEN long and dreary years have scarcely passed—
 Though years that seemed as centuries!
 and cast
 That dark and evil shadow o'er my heart,
 In which shall Time claim neither power
 nor part—
 Since near yon distant, near yon towering dome,
 Rising above the dark woods of *her* home,
 Dwelt a young maiden, sweeter than the light—
 A maiden gloriously fair and bright,
 Who was, men said, so beautiful a creature,
 So faultless, both in heart, in form, in feature,
 One felt she must be of some holier sphere
 Than ours, and placed by some wild blunder here!

"I was not the lost wretch thou see'st me now!—
 A thing of withered soul and deep-lined brow,
 But one had Nature painted with a bright
 And lavish brush, of colour, grace, and light.
 Yet Nature painted still a falsehood—I
 Was even as one unfit to live or die.
 Oh! most unfit to *live!*—a thing of nought,
 For this great atmosphere of work and thought!
 Nay! in a world of mercy and sweet deeds,
 I seemed a weed, choked up by fouler weeds,
 Festering upon a dark and evil way—
 Swift death the only boon for which to pray!

"Who, in my shrunken form and hollow eyes,
 The youth of those past years shall recognise?
 Men live a busy life, and little they
 Cared for the darkness that beset *my* way;
 And when the shades of sorrow o'er me crept,
 No man upheld me, and no woman wept;
 The world but scorned a youth who ne'er became
 Its candidate for wealth, for power, for fame!
 And I gave scoff for scoff!—a simple cot,
 Built in some tranquil, some forgotten spot,
 Some shady forest, unexplored by man—
 Some cave, whose size the eye could scarcely span—
 Deep vales where human step had rarely been—
 Broad wastes which human eyes had rarely seen—
 These gave me rapture, these I proudly trod
 With mien assured and calm, as of a god!
 Or, rather, with the insolence of one
 Whose steps were conqueror's, and whose rights were won!

"Oh! when I looked upon the seas that raged—
 The headstrong winds, direct from Heaven, that waged
 War unto death with earth—the blasted path
 The lightning left behind it in its wrath—
 Oh! when I heard the thunder's after-peal,
 And felt the startled earth beneath me reel,
 Or, in an hour more tranquil, with wrapt soul
 Looked up to Heaven, to watch the planets roll,
 Listening for sweetest melody!—I felt
 Uplifted, o'er the world in which I dwelt,
 Lost in the dreams of some fantastic sphere,
 Where there is neither death, nor doubt, nor fear.

"Yet sometimes, with a fancy, rich and warm,
 I paused awhile, to paint a face, a form
 Of womanhood, more sweet than any flower

That ever blossomed in an earthly bower !
 Later, in sadder moments, I was taught
 These were but dreams, by Fancy's pencil
 wrought.

Man knows no happiness on earth—
 although

Delirious pleasure, with its hollow smile,
 Only to deepen the impending woe,
 May, with false semblance, cheat the heart
 awhile.

" Ah ! Earth is fairer in her flowers, her
 trees,

Her noble mountains, her unfathomed seas,
 In all that Nature may create, or plan,
 Than in that proudest of her works—in
 Man !

And many sins my years of life have
 blotted ;

And yet there *was* a time—a time un-
 spotted !—

Night after night, when others lay asleep,
 In words fresh from my heart, and strong
 and deep,

By strength of passion only rendered
 bold,

Beneath HER lattice my mad love I told !
 I knew not *then* I stood upon the brink
 Of that dark chasm—wherein, did I sing,
 I sank into a deeper gloom than night,
 Where there shall be no joy, and *no more*
light !

Fool ! fool !—for who was I, that I should
 dare

To seek a prize so costly and so rare !
 Fool ! fool ! whose eyes were blinded by
 conceit,

Who saw not even the pitfalls at his feet !
 So, when it fell, the blow was roughly
 sent,

The veil that veiled mine eyes was sternly
 rent :

I trusted but too madly to the vows
 Breathed in sweet twilight, under summer
 boughs,

While o'er her tender, young, and thought-
 less head

The crescent moon its pensive lustre shed.

" They warned me woman's love was
 ever changing
 Like butterfly from rose to lily ranging,—

Yet when I heard it said of her I loved,
 My heart with fury—not with fear—was
 moved.

Yet came a time—an hour—when with a
 start

I felt a serpent's coils were in my heart ;
 A burning fire had settled in my brain,
 A fire no human hand could quench again,
 An anguish that could never more be
 cured,

A wrong to be eternally endured !
 For I remember still her bridal white,
 Her fair face veiled for ever from my
 sight,—

The dark and glowing eyes of other days,
 That bent not now on *me* her loving
 gaze."—

" I know not—I—how passed the after
 years,—

Something I still recall of burning tears,
 Of fiery anguish, of a weary pain—
 A sickness of the soul, darkness of brain—
 Nor know I where my footsteps went, nor
 how

I fared, in after hours—'tis nothing now !—
 The shades of death are dark, yet not
 appalling—

I know that they are here—are slowly
 falling—

Nay ! I have prayed—long—for this
 moment,—I

Am well content—more than content—to
 die—"

His brow was damp with death, and
 cold and chill,

Sometimes they heard him faintly moaning
 —still ;

Feebly he muttered, with his weary eyes
 Lit with the last light of our earthly skies ;
 And as he lay, his wasted, restless fingers
 Clasped and reclasped—as when, re-
 luctant, lingers

The breath of life within a shattered
 frame—

The last, pale flicker of a dying flame—
 Yet *once* they caught his utterance—it was
 this—

That life was agony, death only bliss,—
 Even then his head fell forward on his
 breast,

And so they softly left him—to his rest !*

* The poor fellow's fate needs no explanation—his own words explain the cause of the end of his
 unfortunate love, and the close of his life. Madness—not sin !

O PINE WOODS—PINE WOODS!

O PINE woods—pine woods!—under the
sunset sky

Thy shade is heavy upon the mossy
ground,
And the sigh of thy boughs is even as the
old world's sigh,
As thy ripened fir-cones fall with a
faint, sad sound—

And the fragile hare-bells, blooming
around the roots

Of thy gaunt old stems, look sad in the
sombre green—

For ages the plain was theirs, yet little it
boots

To ask of the sights that they in the
past had seen.

For, still as the pine-woods moan, so,
year by year,

Those bells had blossomed upon the
same calm spot,

And a lover's kiss, or a lost one's bitter
tear,

Belong to an old past that new times
know not.

And the hills around, and the rocks so
rough and steep,

And the graves—close by—of the dead
none now can claim,*

And the stars that rise, and shimmer upon
the deep,

These still are there, and ever remain
the same.

For the world swings round, and the world
cares not for these,

And the winds sigh on, through the
stately, mournful trees,

Forgetting the steps that under their
boughs once trod,

And the bones that rest in the dry and
ungrassed sod.

Yes!—still when the leaves, year after
year, lie rotten,

The voice of the past is passionless or
dumb—

Life springs anew, and the dead shall be
forgotten,

And the hours that pass make way for
the hours that come!

PRAY FOR THE END!

OR,

EARLY BIRDS.

O BIRDS of summer-time, ye sing *too*
soon!†

Ye are too like Life's early dawns—
bright

With all sweet promise of a glowing
noon,

And no forebodings of a gloomy night!

So unto him who through the shadow
gropes,

Feeling his way in the disordered
hours—

Thy voices but remind of earthly hopes,
That spring to die, in unprotected
bowers.

Ah me! the first sweet rays of summer-
time!

The water-flowers we gather with the
reeds!

Why wait we not for seasons in their
prime,

Ere we desire to pluck the unripe seeds?

Shall we rejoice, as though no flowers
shall fade,

And plan sweet walks through regions
of delight?

Through plains of sunshine that but end
in shade,

Through fields of bloom that lead to
fields of blight?

Yon plains—to thee but bright and
fragrant places,

Take thee to tear-stained tombs, o'er-
grown with age,

Alas! no wanderer here his step retraces—
There is no turning back of Life's last
page.

* A very old graveyard is in the vicinity of this wood. The cliffs near are covered with dense pine plantations, exceedingly beautiful at sunset or by moonlight.

† At Bournemouth on January 2nd, 1884, the thrushes and blackbirds were singing as merrily as they usually sing in May and June.

Go on—go forward—but implore not thou
 For future blessings—nor bewail the
 past,
 But pray—that on thy worn, uplifted brow
 May shine the light of Heaven, of peace
 at last!

TO ENGLAND'S QUEEN.*

PEACE, henceforth, be with thee and with
 thy years,
 And freedom from all sorrow's bitter
 tears,—
 For nobly hast thou graced fair England's
 throne,—
 Thy paths have been in folly's realm un-
 known.
 Right gladly in thy cause our soldiers
 bleed,
 So right thy every public word and deed;
 For both in storm and in the calm sun-
 shine,
 To help, to free—these efforts have been
 thine.

Thou hast remembered that the wisest
 use
 Of power lies oft in staying power's
 abuse—
 Peace, hope, and trust, o'er many a desert
 plain,
 Now smile, where once was discord's
 wildest reign.
 Thou hast a crown no envy can destroy,
 Nor even shall glory bring to thee the joy
 That only to such lives as thine belong—
 A joy beyond the poet's loftiest song.

'Tis true that troubles, wars, misfortunes,
 crimes,
 Have been in thine, as in all bygone times;
 For there are foes o'er whom all power is
 vain—
 Famine, disease, revolt return again.
 And still thy name to British hearts is dear!
 And still thy *right* to British hearts is
 clear!
 So, under either strange, or England's sky,
 Our soldiers fight for thee, nor fear to die.

None can complain that thou hast used
 thy power
 For purposes of tyranny; no hour

Known of thy prosperous reign betrays the
 mark
 Of careless thought—much less of faults
 more dark.
 May others who succeed in thy proud place,
 Be gifted with thy strength and gentle
 grace;
 Then shall succeeding ages bring, still
 more
 Peace, honour, happiness, to England's
 shore!
January 29th, 1884.

THE VIRGINIAN CREEPER;

OR,

SPREADING AWAY.

SHE looked, with her sad, prophetic eyes,
 At the strong young creepers, as they
 swang,
 In the glowing light of the sunset skies,
 From the parent stem from which they
 sprang.

And she said, in her soft, unfretful voice,
 "It is better far that this should be!
 That I taught my sad heart to rejoice,
 When they root so far away from me;

"That they cling, in time, to another soil,
 Than the old-world furrows here we see,
 And—apart from their parents' care and
 toil,
 Begin a life that is henceforth free.

"Ah—yet what a pang, if a pang un-
 spoken,
 Must rest on my brain with a heavy
 weight;
 Though even if hearts are wrung, or
 broken,
 I know it the will of Heaven—not fate!

"And yet it is hard to learn why Heaven
 Thus parts, from the old and wise, the
 young;
 But never to earthly mind was given
 To read in the Book of the Unknown
 Tongue.

* These lines were written after reading Queen Victoria's book, 1884.

"Oh! would that we had but a faithful trust
In the words of old—in the deeds long done,
That the bulbs that lie in the earth's hard crust,
Shall sprout again for another sun!

"Oh! a rest and a comfort yet shall be
For the faith that breathes, for the lips that pray;
And the wandering vessels long at sea
At last come home to the sheltered bay!"

THE GREAT GRANDMOTHER OF —.

THEY say she sat beneath her cottage eaves,
Her little young fingers sometimes idly playing
With red and brown Virginian-creeper leaves,
Whose branches o'er her rustic porch were straying.

Her face was fair, her brow was low and broad,
Her eyes were quite of Heaven's own pensive blue;
Few gallant youths could look and yet afford
To turn their eyes and steal another view!

Her blushing cheek was softer than the peach,
Tempting admiring youthful rustics sore!
And she would give them all, she gave them each,
A smile of friendliness, but nothing more!

The children of that calm and greenwood place
Were all her little playmates and her friends—
Although with all that gentle, maiden grace,
No little dignity—if softly—blends!

She was the very brightness of that spot,
To towns, to crowded cities, all unknown;
She was the sunshine in each rustic cot,
Where praise and faithful love were all her own!

And yet no rustic youth could ever gain
That hand, as many heard them sadly say;
Their hopes, their sighs, were all, alas!
In vain,
She only gently smiled and said them nay!

But once a youthful knight came riding by,
And then, it was the fine old tale again!
That common tale he told, with smile and sigh,
That never, never shall be told in vain!

That gallant knight was no deceiving youth,
To brazen falsehood and *chicanerie* given;
His vows were simply those of faith and truth,
His eyes—the clear and sunny blue of heaven!

And though, not like the gallant Lochinvar,
He bore her gaily from her father's side;
He took her to a fair hill-home afar—*
A home of which she was the help and pride!

She gave her people work; she taught the poor;
She showed the thriftless how to wisely live;
She turned no needy suppliant from the door,
Whenever she a helping hand could give,

Alas! they missed her sadly when she left
These simple country homes, these rustic farms;
And of her ready help and cheers bereft,
The place, they said, soon lost its brightest charms.

I care, in sober truth, to see no more
 The home that she in life had made so
 bright;
 It lacks the graces that it had before,
 And so—thou sweet and old-world home
 —good night!*

TO —.

WELL may men praise thee, for indeed
 thou art
 One of a thousand in this varied life;
 In the cruel work of "spite" thou hast
 no part,
 Thou dost abhor the slanderer's poisoned
 knife!

Thou dost not stab another in the dark;
 That vengeance, some we know, have
 loved to wreak!
 No "double" meaning shall *thy* accents
 mark,
 The guileless to deceive—to wrong the
 weak.

Thou dost not seek to cast an evil blight
 Upon all things that look too full of
 peace;
 Thou hast no "cast" in thy straight-
 forward sight,
 Nor hath thine open brow an evil *crease*!

If thou art injured, thy few words are
 plain,
 And strong, it may be, yet but wisely
 strong—
 True! they may anger much the vile and
 vain;
 They pardon not, we know, who do the
 wrong!

Oh! if we could, in this mixed world of
 ours,
 But rid us of a *certain* tribe of sinners!
 Life's race would then be test of fairer
 powers,
 And *some*, I fear, would scarce be of the
 winners!

Ha! then there would be no more envious
 faces,—
 They would be then below us—not
 around!

The world would be a world of sweeter
 places,—
 The voice of love a far more common
 sound!

A SURPRISE FOR CERTAIN MEAN HEARTS.

FOR — AND —.

I KNOW a thing your mean hearts to
 surprise,
 A human being, clever, thoughtful, wise;
 And yet a man—to some a puzzling thing—
 Whose words of censure have no spiteful
 sting!

I know a man whose pulse seems ever
 steady—
 A man one always finds, when needed,
 ready!
 A man whose placid brow in vain you
 traced
 For signs of anger, irritation, haste.

I know a man whom no weight, no op-
 pression
 Of work, even work that some term "out
 of session!"
 Can ever make, even for most tempting
 ends,
 Despire, mislead, forget, or doubt his
friends.

I know a man whom none can say will
 shirk,
 Howe'er fatigued he feels, an urgent work;
 In early morning, or at noon, at night,
 The world shall find him busy, strong,
 upright.

I know a man who never seems to think
 Of self, though he be even on the brink
 Of fainting by the rough and rude way-
 side,
 He bears his pain—with fortitude—not
 pride.

To look back on a strong, a stainless path,
 To sit beside a sweet, unblemished
 hearth—

A home to have where love and honour
 shine,
 This is the home on earth, one feels
 divine!

* A true tale of the marriage of—.

I HAVE MET ANGELS IN THIS LIFE.

I HAVE met angels in this life — God knows!

Hands strong and brave, faithful and steadfast feet,

Hearts glowing like the heart of summer rose,

Souls as the lily—holy, pure and sweet.

I have met honest faith and honest trust,

I have met honest lips and honest eyes;

Temptations have seen trodden in the dust,

By steps that were unboastful, calm and wise.

I have known courage that could face the blow

Of coarse defeat without one poor complaint;

That calmly met the angry torrent's flow,
Nor knew what it might be to shrink and faint.

I have known men whom sin could not degrade

By any pleasure vice, as yet, hath claimed—

Men whom Temptation, that wild witch, waylaid,

Only to see her slink away ashamed.

I have known souls for ever calmly wise,
Who loathed the slanderer, and could hear unmoved

The speciousness of Envy's bitter lies—

Souls to be honoured, and, above all—loved!

YET HAVE WE ALSO KNOWN.

YET have we also known right selfish hearts!

We have known those whose breath could freeze the air!

Although that they could play pure *devil's* parts,

Had never even crossed our mind—we swear!

These were devoid of strength; but they one skill

Possessed, and that one in *excess*, some said!

They could the fairest reputation kill,
Nor cease to *stab* at it, when it *was* dead!

They had no charity for others' woes;
And if a mother by a death-bed prayed,
Struck at her, *then*, those rarely brutal blows,

That have a life-long enmity betrayed!

The dreary meanness, marking certain faces,

One leaves to time, too idly to inveil,
Too much of trust one hath, in sundry cases,

That circumstances shall "unfold" a tale"!

Yet but a traveller—foolish and unwise,—
Will, as his track leads o'er some foul morasses,

Full of the blackest pitfalls—veil his eyes,
And trust to chance that he in safety passes!

A WANT!

AMONGST CERTAIN SO-CALLED CHRISTIANS.

THERE'S "honour amongst thieves,"—yet shall you find

'Tis wanting amongst *so-called* Christians! Some

Know not its very echo—with each mind
As empty of it, as 'twere a crack'd drum!

Where'er such tread, are marks of unclean feet—

Their hearts beat falsehoods with their every beat!

Their breath comes out upon the peaceful night,

Hot with the foulest malice, lies, and spite!

Not only colour-blind are they—*far worse!*

Their gaze discovers *mildews*, yet unknown!

Whate'er they touch, at once receives a
curse,—
Whate'er bread *they* bake is found—a
stone!

There is so much full-beautiful in life,
When one is wandering in its peaceful
groves!—
When all of tenderness and joy is rife,
Thrilling with the sweet sounds the true
heart loves—

Doves that coo softly from the leafy trees,
Sounds that we know, and sounds we
ever bless—
We are aggrieved!—when we are torn from
these,
To hear the hateful voices some possess!

There's "honour amongst thieves"—yet
shall you find
'Tis wanting amongst *so-called*
Christians!—some
Know not its very echo—and each
mind
As empty of it as 'twere a crack'd drum!

PHILOSOPHY.

AH, Life! shall teach us lessons hard and
stern—
Not only speak to thee of strength in
sorrow—
A darker lesson thou from her may'st
learn,
Not such as thou can'st *quite* dismiss to-
morrow!

If she to thee the true and faithful shows—
The sympathiser with thy pains and
fears—
The gentle, loving sharer of thy woes—
The kindly—who shall weep thy bitter
tears,—

So shall she, also, show the hardened
heart,
Whose blows of scorn no words of pity
stay—
The seeming friends that from thy side
depart,
The moment sunlight fades upon thy
way!

So shall she show to thee what faces wear—
And *smilingly* — the mask of mean
deceit;

So shall she show thee many a vulgar
snare
That some delight to spread around thy
feet—

Treasure them all — these lessons! — every
one
May useful be,—if even sore and sad;
Yes! e'er thy chequered race on earth is
run,
Thou may'st, for each and all of them,
be glad!

DISOWN!

TRUE, there are those who warmly grip
your hand
While summer sunlight smiles upon your
land,
Whose eyes are, seeming-eyes of love's own
blindness,
While the world's breath is but the breath
of kindness—

Oh! there are those who, while the winds
are still,
Speak never of you any word of ill—
Whose lips but utter smooth and oily
things,
And have a *loathing* of all viper's stings!

Yes! such as these, my friend, will watch
thy ways,
To follow them with words of open praise,
And point out that thy path is fair and
sweet—
That flowers, the brightest, grow around
thy feet.

But life is not *all* sunshine!—there are
hours
When winds of death will break those very
flowers,
And when the lambkins die within thy fold,
When on all plains the air of earth seems
cold.

Then—look not for these friends—they
slink away
Out of all shadows of thy saddened day—
Or only speak of thee with harshest tone—
*Such friends, in all thy after-days—
disown!*

LOOK BACK.

LOOK back, ye bitter ones, upon the past,
What shall ye find of comfort in that gaze?

How little was there, even from first to last,

Of gentle charity to light thy days!

How little loving-kindness did'st thou teach,—

Thy words were of the doom of the accursed!

How slow thou wast to learn—how quick to teach!—

How ever keen to see, in life, the worst!

How sharp wert thou in action—hard of word;

How slow wert thou from Mercy's lips to learn;

How little of life's sweeter accents heard;

How ready for the harvest's ill return!

Ye but too easily in wrong believe;

Ye scoff at the idea of deeds of right;

Ye cry that man was born but to deceive—
To take the paths that lead him into night!

Ye are not fit with greater souls to dwell—

To master paths the great had paced before;

The stranger, fuller legends they might tell,

To thee would be but legends—nothing more!

WOUNDS FROM MEAN HANDS.

It is not pleasant one should e'er be driven

To give *one* thought to a poor vulgar smart;

But if a nail into thy flesh is driven—

A nail of *rust*, it needs must make thee start!

And death hath followed on a hornet's sting,

Given when the flesh was tender or unsound;

And thou may'st stumble o'er the meanest thing,

And bruise thy flesh upon the flint-strewn ground!

Yet one shall still be vexed that such mean creatures

Should dare inflict a wound on thy proud heart—

Should have the power to change *one* placid feature,

Ere thou can'st bid the loathsome things depart.

But, at the worst, sweet patience hath a wand,

And can bring joy back to a blighted scene,

Drive off the yellow fogs that veil the land,
So that the plants and flowers once more are green.

And with the air and light shall slink away

The newts and snakes, each into some foul spot—

And leave thee to the calm of a late day,
Once more by loathsome reptiles troubled not!

A LETTER TO —.

NO! we knew not the lies that spite was telling,

We knew not when an evil spirit came

Into the *shadowed* fairness of Love's dwelling,

To see if it might bring it unto shame.

We knew not then that we were colour-blind!—

That what we sunlight thought was Hell's fierce glow;

And that a blasting, a disastrous wind
Could bring to summer fields the winter's snow.

God knows why hearts so full of hate and spite

Dwell on an earth by far too sad, and why

There is so much of shadow to the light,
So much dark cloud to sunshine in the sky!

Something is idleness — meanness of thought,

A want of power and sweetness in the mind—

Something of evil views from others caught—

Distorted visions from the would-be blind!

And therefore dense, unfragrant vapours lie

Upon the "broad" but unclean paths they tread;

There shineth there no light from a pure sky,

To light them gently downward to the dead!

CONTEMPT FOR LYING LIPS.

LETTER TO —.

'Tis true we look with calmer eyes than some

Upon that stream of slander, evil-smelling,

That will unto the sweetest meadows come,
And leave its traces near the fairest dwelling.

The lies of malice cannot touch *our* heart,
Nor turn *our* sunlight into vicious gloom;

And we may play in life too strong a part,
For them to place *their* hemlock on *our* tomb.

'Tis true that, if they did, we should not care!

It could touch none that love us, well we know,

Although the mouths of some have such foul air,

It might taint much except the frozen snow!

That there be many liars, oft wounds too much!

Because of "evil doers" fret thou not:
If they defile things with their unclean touch,

Truth shall in time obliterate the spot!

It is *themselves* they stain—with such a stain

That none could take from hands like theirs a rose;

To cleanse those hands they even would seek in vain

They are so dyed with *others'* wrongs and woes!

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

To —.

THE past is lost — shall never be recalled!

The race thou had'st to run is nearly run;

That very past is round thee sternly walled,

And shuts the light out of the setting sun.

Yes—lost for ever!—thou can'st not restore

The blossoms thou hast trampled in the dust—

They beautify the earth for thee no more,

Earth hides them in her hard, unyielding crust.

A mist is on the bosom of the sea;

The vessel thou hast sent forth on the waves

Shall never more return in joy to thee—

Its sailors—afar away—shalt find their graves.

Would'st thou restore some lost, neglected joy,

The hour for it hath passed—*ye call too late!*

The hand of man shall easily destroy;

The hand of man shall not, at will, create.

It "might have been" is all remaining now—

It "might have been!" but it was thine own hand

That tore the wreath of roses from thy brow,

And scattered its dead petals o'er the land!

LISTENING!

Lo!—listening to the voices of *this* life
A strange, wild mixture trembles through
the air!

The voices of mean hate, of vulgar strife,
With echoes of a past, but deep,
despair.

Yes! echoes of the very foulest lies,
Clashing full noisily upon the way,
Float past, into the dreary, darkening
skies,—
Float past, into a distance, cold and
grey.

Voices that are of earth's unrighteousness,
That less the sounds of grief and pain
repeated,
Less brought the sounds of pitiful distress,
Than of ambition baffled, hate defeated.

In every accent—shrill, or deep, or
hoarse—

These echoes come from an unfathomed
shade,

And yet—above—is one of greater force,
The voice of love—love ever undismayed.

The other bitter sounds but rise and fall,
And then pass on—their hateful day is
o'er:

Stronger than all the cries that shall appal
Love's voice shall comfort us for ever—
more!

LOVE! THOU ART GENEROUS.

LOVE! thou art generous unto all of those
Whose listening ears catch gladly thy
rich strains;

Thou watchest sweetly over their repose,
Thy footsteps mark their valleys, woods,
and plains.

Thou dost not shun the peasant in his cot,
Wherein he dwells, though it be poor
and bleak;

Although the wealthy oft may know thee
not,

*And to the Pharisees thou shalt not
speak.*

For there are those whose lips thou
shalt not kiss,

And round whose forms thine arms shall
ne'er be wreathed;

There shall be hearts who never know thy
bliss,

Upon whose cold brow thou hast never
breathed.

These are the unbelievers! and thy voice
*Speaks not to them, nor in the night,
nor day,*

Thou can'st not bid the dead, O Love!
rejoice,

And these—*are of the dead*—whose lips
are clay!

They know thee not, nor wear thy gracious
flowers;

Thy starlight on their paths shall never
rest;

They linger not in thy sweet woodland
bowers,

Nor ever sleep, O Love! upon thy
breast!

AGAIN—THEY KNOW THEE

NOT!

AGAIN—they know thee not—thou hast
not placed

Upon their brows thy circlet of pure
gold;

To them thy verdant meadows seem but
waste—

To them thy rose-sweet woods are only
cold.

Again—they know thee not—thou would'st
disdain

To dwell in the drear dwellings that are
theirs;

For them thy glorious notes would ring in
vain,—

Their hearts sleep in a crust of sordid
cares.

O Love—for them thou hast no light, no
bloom,—

Thy rippling stream their mean feet
never laves;

Thou wilt no garlands hang upon *their*
tomb,

Thou wilt no lilies plant upon *their*
graves.

Thou seem'st to those a phantom, who
have felt
No glory, known no rapture that is
thine!

They have not in thine ancient temple
knel't,
They have not worshipped at thy old-
world shrine!

No! Love—they know thee not—thou hast
not kissed

Their brows, nor even smiled into their
eyes;

Thou hast not through *their* woodlands
strolled, I wist!—

Thou hast from them for ever veiled thy
skies!

O LOVE!—AROUSE THEE.

O LOVE!—arouse thee; they do mock at
thee!

Men say thy voice is neither sweet nor
clear;

Thine eyes of brightness they no more can
see,

Neither thy voice of passion can they
hear.

They shrink not from the glory of thine
eyes,—

They cannot understand thy thrilling
voice;

Thou art a form to startle and surprise,
Not one which men shall see but to
rejoice.

Thou art a mystery—one that shall
affright

Those who shall first thy unveiled brow
perceive;

Thine eyes shall dazzle them by their glad
light,

They are bewildered and can *not*
believe!

Thou art to them a vision—as a dream

In which the hapless wanderer may
stray;

As one that shall both fair and glowing
seem,

A *mirage*—which approached shall fade
away!

Not round *their* doors thy garlands shalt
thou wreath,
O Love! through any hours of day or
night!

Beneath *such* roofs, O Love! *thou can'st*
not breathe—

The air, to thee, is one of chill and
blight.

So wilt thou hasten from all spots like
these,

Hastening to leave unfragrant paths
behind;

Groping thy way through groves of leafless
trees,

Thy footprints swept away by the rude
wind!

ROMANCE HOLDS HER OWN!

SHALL poetry, then, charm *thee*, of all
men,

O Prince! Can birds, or flowers, *thy*
spirit thrill—

Dost thou forget the wars of peoples, when
In some calm hours its thundering notes
are still!

Love! love! with its enchanting, tender
voice,

Can it re-echo in *thine* iron breast!

And would'st thou really, if thou had'st
thy choice,

Desire, beyond ambition's turmoil —
rest!

We know a *gourmand* hath refused a
store

Of luscious dishes for some simple meat;

To ears accustomed to the battle's roar,
The sweet songs of a village *may* be
sweet!

Yet the recluse, who dwelleth in a cot,
Dreams that the great world his meek
tastes despise,—

That his calm atmosphere they—knowing
not—

Paint with no hues that brighten their
own skies!

Man cannot fashion or his paths or taste,
And make all things he hath of one
accord,—

See only what he hath he doth not waste!
And therein will he find no small
reward!

O LOVE! O POETRY!

O LOVE! O Poetry! ye both were born
 In heaven, to light the world like glowing stars—
 Rising for ever in a golden dawn,
 Paled but by the fierce light of lurid wars.

O Love! O Poetry! all those on whom
 Thy starlight rests know many glorious hours;
 Thy tender rays even shimmer on the tomb,
 And touch the pale leaves of our autumn flowers.

Thy voices pacify the rudest storm
 That ever thunders on earth's broken shores!
 Where ye are *there* the air is sweet and warm,
 Full of the breath of LIFE's redundant stores.

Though many bowers are thine, there shall be yet
 Dark homes, dark places, that *know not thy feet*,
 Upon which thy fair stars nor rise nor set,
 Upon which winds blow never fresh nor sweet—

Deserts that ye full mournfully pass near,
 Yet enter not, to sing thy holy strains—
 Where all is desolate and cold and drear,
 And where the winds blow o'er deserted plains!

NOT ALL THE GLORY

Nor all the glory of exalted powers
 Can brighten Life so much as Love can brighten—
 No! there is nothing in our earthly hours
 That shall so sweetly all our labours lighten.

Not the coarse love *some* write of—not
 that glow
 That any passing chill shall soon destroy—
 Love far more of the darker world below!
 Love often but of strangely vulgar joy—

For ever seeking self, and self's delight,
 Craving its own will—shrinking from the storm,
 And loving only eyes that shall seem bright,
 And loving only lips that shall be warm.

No! Love's own eyes, when Love deserves the name,
 Hath nothing in their glow of mean or vile—
 Hath nothing of the burning blush of shame,
 Hath nothing of a mean or passing smile.

Proud, yea! but only proud of noble power;
 Not full of storms and mists, but calm and clear,
 And faithful to life's last and saddest hour;
 Strong—ah! so strong that death shall bring no fear!

FAME.

"I do not value Fame, good friend," I said
 To —: "much on this matter I have read;
 But Fame hath too uncertain, fickle ways,
 That one should prize, o'ermuch, her blame or praise."

"I say this from no affectation—no!
 In early days my views were different;
since
 I've seen Fame hath but an ephemer'ral glow!
 A fact 'twere simple foolishness to *mince!*

"And I write now for—simply—writing's pleasure—
 Though for distraction—first—in hours of grief—
 Seeing that, at the least, in some small measure,
 It brought the sad and weary thoughts relief.

"Again—I ne'er could worship Fame, although
 I look upon her with no fool's mean eyes;

She hath to me been kindly, as I know,
Nor need one even her slightest smile
despise.

"To some she seems a meteor in the
night,
To light her followers on some ardent
race;

And some maintain she is a cheating light,
With something—*not* of Heaven! upon
her face.

"Let each speak as he finds her—as we
hear
Old-fashioned people say! Her glow to
some
Hath been beyond all painting—but, I
fear,
Only her *rushlight* rays to *others* come!"

A HAPPIER LAND!

HER eyes look forward to a happier land,
Where envy, hate, and malice have no
powers,
And where, with a *belov'd* one, hand in
hand,
Her steps shall wander through a world
of flowers.

Love hath to her been glorious upon earth,
Whose joy she would that all on earth
might learn,
Believing that in Heaven it had its birth,
And that to Heaven in joy it shall
return.

Love, unto those that here shall know it
not,
Either in early years of life, or late,
Is but a vision in the sceptic's lot,
From which they pass as through a
dreary gafe!

They know not of Love's rapture, nor its
pain,
Yet deem themselves the wisest of their
class!
They know no loss, and *thereby* is their
gain—
So, blind and deaf, through all life's
scenes they pass.

Yes! there are those whom Love shall
never find;
They cannot walk in her fair, fragrant
ways;
Feeble of soul are such, and poor of
mind—
They dwell on earth but in her twilight
days!

HOURS—FAIR AND SWEET.

NO. I.

LIFE, O thou beautiful!—to hear the
birds!
The many glad sounds of advancing
spring!
The gentle low of the contented herds—
The wild bees, humming past upon the
wing—

The opening of the rose-buds by the road,
The blue-bells nodding to the sun's
bright smile;
The springing up of seeds that Nature
sowed,
But left to slumber in the earth awhile—

The sweet scent of the hidden violets,
That reach us as we wander down the
lane,
And watch the star of Venus as she sets
Behind the purple vapours of the plain—

The wandering o'er the common and the
moor,
Startling the hare that slumbers in the
brake;
Or through the dense woods crowning the
sea-shore,
Wherein the nightingale's sweet songs
awake—

Gathering the clematis of forest bowers,
The blue forget-me-nots beside the
stream;
Ah — it is well — if but for some brief
hours
Of life the fair and beautiful to dream!
May, 1884.

HOURS—FAIR AND SWEET.

NO. II.

SWEET is the honeysuckle in the hedges;
 Fair the ranunculus amongst the sedges;
 Fair is the lily, floating on the stream;
 Fair is the wild rose, as a poet's dream

Fair the star-bethlehem, with its petals
 white,
 Shining amid the dark shades of the night;
 Sweet are the primroses amid the grasses,
 The violets over which the west wind
 passes.

Sweet is the tinkling of the faint sheep-
 bells,
 The wild bees humming homewards to
 their cells;
 The nightingale, that from the thorn-bush
 sings,
 Startling the dusky bat upon its wings.

Sweet is the beetle's last resounding hum,
 The last low sighs that from the green
 wood come;
 The house-dog's bark, that—distant, deep,
 and clear—
 Falls with a soothing echo on the ear.

All fair and sweet—to tell us toil is o'er—
 That busy sounds shall vex the world no
 more;
 Even then the stars look down on evenfall,
 And love, at last, is monarch over all!

PALE PRIMROSES OF SPRING-
TIDE.

PALE primroses of spring-tide, that
 blossom by the way,
 Veronicas of river sides—pink petals of
 the May—
 Ye make the sad eyes brighter, and the
 tired heart beat with joy,
 As though no frosts could nip thy buds,
 no blighting winds destroy!

We think of happy days to come, when,
 in our June's glad prime,
 Earth's flowers increase in beauty, and
 make glad the summer-time—

When zephyr shall be breathing of the
 sweetest woodland scent,
 By myriad tiny blossoms from their green
 recesses lent!

Ah me! but there are many hours when
 sadly we remember
 The biting frosts of autumn and the blasts
 of bleak December;
 And when we view, regretfully, the paths
 behind, and see
 Only the last chrysanthemum—pale flower
 of memory!

I would ye were more lasting, yet we then
 should ever miss
 The very lesson of this life — joy's
 evanescent kiss!—
 That warns us, by the fading of each lovely,
 fragile flower,
 That youth and joy are shadowy realms,
 and death—earth's greatest power!

Still—primroses of spring-tide, that blos-
 som by the way,
 Veronicas of river-sides—pink petals of the
 May—
 Ye make the sad eyes brighter, and the
 tired heart beat with joy,
 As though no frosts could nip thy buds,
 no blighting winds destroy.

AH! THE SUMMER OF LIFE!

AH! the summer of Life—so fair and so
 sweet,
 Ah! the summer of Life—season filled
 with delight—
 Thy flowers, as they blossom, how gladly
 we greet,
 Nor dream of the possible hours of their
 blight.

Ah! the summer of life—ah! thou exquisite
 dream!
 Too soon have the hours of thy happi-
 ness passed;
 Like the scenes of a better world often
 they seem,
 Like the glimpse of a heaven all too
 soon overcast.

Ah! the summer of life—as thy pathways
 we take,
 We gather—too carelessly, oft—on our
 way,

The blossoms that smile through the coarse,
thorny brake,
Nor note the black thunderstorms
clouding the day.

Ah! the summer of life—while the sun
shineth brightly,
We think but of lotus-flowers bathed in
its glow;
So the seasons of pleasure pass swiftly and
lightly,
While seasons succeeding seem dreary
and slow.

Ah! the summer of life—none shall ever
restore
Those roses of joy we so carelessly
guard;
They fade and they wither, they cheer us
no more,
And the lessons they read us are bitter
and hard.

BEAUTIFUL AUTUMN.

BEAUTIFUL Autumn! calm and fair!
Though the white streaks shine in thy
loosened hair!
With thy voice in the breezes' plaintive
sigh,
With the lurid glow in thy evening sky—

Beautiful Autumn!—grandly still—
With the purple shades on the plain and
hill,
With the voice of rooks in their homeward
flight,
That dies in the swiftly falling night—

Beautiful Autumn!—with no throes
Of life's despair in thy breathless
close—

Thy reign o'er the earth shall ever cease
As one who, in dying, strives for peace!

Beautiful Autumn!—giving place
To the coming King with a sombre grace,
Contending never, on wood or plain,
Thy longer right on the throne to reign.

Beautiful Autumn!—pain is dumb
As we see a ruder monarch come,
And with only a sad, submissive tear,
We see thee laid with the dying year.

THE BEAUTY OF WINTER.

STARRY, serene, and beautifully bright,
Descends upon the earth the northern
night!

The woodland birds into their nests
retire,
The labourer shelters by his ruddy cottage
fire.

No Poet to the woodlands takes his way,
To write his sonnets to the moon's pale
ray!

The shepherd early leaves his sheltered
fold,
And there are footsteps few that cross the
frostbound wold.

And yet thou hast a beauty all thine
own,

O northern Winter! to the south un-
known!

Nor yet the less magnificent that thou
bindest no passion-flowers around thy
chilly brow.

Thou hast thine own unblemished
diadems,

Thy crown is studded with a thousand
gems;

No dark ambitions, no unholy flame,
A kinship with thy cold, thy pulseless
heart can claim!

Thy woods and groves are voiceless,
even as though

Embalmed in stainless shrouds of frozen
snow!

Untouched by aught that speaks of
earth's alloy,
By either rain-tears or by boisterous winds
of joy!

Softly the white flakes fall on earth's sad
graves,

Sheltering the withered grass and dying
flowers;

Lightly they melt into the ocean waves,
Through the dark gloomy days of winter's
fiercest powers.

And while we moan and weep above the
dead—

Above dark vaults of hidden griefs and
crimes—

Thou dost a spotless bridal garment
spread,
Alas! a veil that seems no fitting one at
times!

Thy march is o'er the bleak, far-stretch-
ing downs,
And by the magic of thine unseen wand
Thou veilest earth's too melancholy
frowns,
And callest the wild voices of the storm-
swept land!

January, 1884.

THE STORM-WIND.

O CYCLOPS of our strange, unresting world,
Thy time-worn pennant never long is
furled!
Thou mouthpiece of a power beyond all
strain
Of wildest fancy born of human brain!

When wilt thou slumber, O thou mighty
wind?
When shall thy subjects rest and safety
find?
Wilt thou not seek thy paths upon the
deep,
And let its billows rock thy gales to sleep?

Can'st thou not scale the Alps' sublimest
crest,
Or in untrodden forests take thy rest?
Or in eternal deserts pause awhile—
Lost in its solemn, everlasting smile?

Tracks are there where no life shall follow
thee
O'er the vexed furrows of the Southern
Sea,
Or where is lost thy fierce, Promethean
moan
In darkest caves of boundaries unknown.

And yet full tenderly thy breath can pass
The daring flowers that grace the mountain
grass,
The tiny snowdrop blessing arctic lands—
The love-lorn cyclamen on desert sands.

Nor will thy voice, with rude carousing,
shock
The slender buds that bless Carpathian
rock;
Nor dost thou wake the violets crouching
down
Beneath last autumn's sheltering leaves of
brown.

But when, beneath the sad, o'erhanging
skies
Thy gigantesque, half-human passions rise,
Until thy rage o'ersteps the widest bounds,
And earth, indignant, echoes the rude
sounds—

Our o'ertaxed mind, or sad and wearied
breast,
No longer on the couch of peace can rest;
The world is wroth with thy ferocious
roar,
And peace, content, and safety reign no
more!*

September, 1883.

DREAM-VOICES.

OR,

DANCING LEAVES.

UNDER the light green boughs one eve
we slept
Until awakened by a soft, sweet sound,
That in and out amongst the bushes crept,
Now near, now distant, now above—
around—

Tiny the voices seemed, like fairy notes,
Touched airily as by mysterious mirth,
Even as though uttered by ethereal throats,
Not jarring—as the accents rude of
earth.

Now would they die away, and, for a
while,
Sounds of the whispering could be heard
no more;
Then, gleaming in the moon's untender
smile,
They dance with Ariel motion—as
before.

* Written during a tremendous tempest of wind, doing much damage in its track.

And, with a fitful restlessness, they twirl,
 As to the music of some goblin strain,
 And then, once more, the fragile edges
 curl
 Into the rest of the calm skies again.

This is thy hour of joy, O tender leaves!
 In maiden's bower, or in wild forest's
 brakes;
 The rest of spring, and summer's softer
 eves,
 When nothing but the nightingale
 awakes.

Yet, as in human lives are darker hours,
 All winds are not soft sighs of summer-
 time;
 When winds and cold, bleak skies combine
 their powers,
 And blight earth's blossoms in their very
 prime.

VIOLETS.—I.

THE LATE VIOLET.*

O THOU sweet-scented violet!—nestling
 down
 Amidst the tender mosses of the bank,
 Under the nettles sprouting tall and
 rank,
 Or veiled by autumn leaves of russet
 brown—

The year is dark and late—what dost thou
 here,
 Amidst forewarnings of the bitter snow!
 Thou, that but under spring's fair skies
 should'st blow,
 Hast thou no feeling of dismay—of fear!

Shalt thou not be some idle wanderer's
 prize,
 And torn away from thy soft hiding-
 place,
 Despoiled of all thy modest tender grace,
 Be flourished rudely in the world's cold
 eyes!

That gentle modesty protects thee—thou
 Neglected art for some far richer bloom!
 And so may pass from springtide to thy
 tomb,
 With peace unruffled on thy gentle brow!

VIOLETS.—II.

Ah, violets!—dearest and simplest of
 flowers,
 Blooming in places of sadness and
 dearth;
 No blossom that graces this dark earth of
 ours,
 Is so fitted for heaven, though so sweet
 upon earth.

Ye grace by your presence the peasant's
 poor cot,
 Be it ever so wretched and mean a
 retreat;
 And I know not if earth hath so dreary a
 spot,
 But thy holiest perfume can render it
 sweet.

Yet royalty's self hath thine emblem
 selected
 To grace by its presence earth's *once*
 proudest throne,†
 And thou in thine unblemished purity
 decked it
 With grace and with modesty never its
 own!

Ye are purest and blest on a child's brow
 of bloom,
 Ye even have blessed earth's most profit-
 less crust,
 And yet ye are fitted for sorrow's own
 tomb,
 And thy blossoms are pure and smell
 sweet in the dust!

DYING DAY.

The evening star shines in the cloudless sky,
 The roses‡ scent the nightingale's green
 bowers,—

* Gathered in December, 1883, at Bournemouth.

† Emblem of the Bonapartes.

‡ "There are many roses out in our garden."—*Letter to —, May 13th, 1884.*

Gently and peacefully the hours glide by,
Almost too peacefully for earthly hours.

Each anguish of the past, each bitter grief,
Seems for the moment as a baseless dream;

Lightly and softly stirs each forest leaf,
And through the meadow ripples the clear stream.

And looking out from the broad ocean shore

We see the moonlight on the waters glisten;

We hear the plashing of a distant oar,
And catch the boatman's carol as we listen.

Too fair it seems for earth, and yet how soon
May all be altered by the hand of death;
And clouds sweep heavily across the moon,
And forests groan to meet the north wind's breath.

The glowing light upon the mountain peak
Fades with the passing of the sun's last rays;
These changes are of earth, and yet they speak
Of the uncertainty of human ways.

PEACE, IN THE WOODS.

THE snow-white owls that softly swoop about

The pine-wood's shadows and mysterious nooks—

The stars of summer softly stealing out,
The slow and homeward flight of dusky rooks—

The flight of bats upon their filmy wings,
That sweet and pure tranquillity—that seems

Of earth far less than of celestial things,
Deluding us as if with heaven-sent dreams—

Peace that seems rarely ours on earth to know,

That follows in our spirit's musing train
Of thought, yet rarely visits homes below—
That some have lived to pray for, and in vain—

The whispering voices, as the twilight falls,
And all last sounds of country labour cease—

Only at times the nightingale's sweet calls,

Or beetle's hum disturb the perfect peace—

Or moaning of the waters, as the stars
Rise slowly on the ocean, as the sun
Sinks down behind the rich and crimson bars

Of mists, proclaiming that—the day is done!

OUT IN THE WATCHES OF THE NIGHT!

THE DISTANT SEA.

Low art thou on thy bed—yon distant line,
O sea, is but a streak of purple waves;
Yet something links thee with the stars that shine
So far above, and peer into thy caves.

Thou dost reflect their smile; therein there seems

A tie between thee and their far-off lights—

Thy waters are as mirrors to their beams,
That help thy sailors in our stormy nights.

But unto us, who on thy shores may dwell,
Thy ever cold indifference seems complete;

Thy heavy billows rise and break, or swell,
Regardless of all toil of human feet.

Earth changes under time's mysterious spells,

Helped in her outer changes even by man;

But nothing in *thy* boundless ranges tells,
Thou mighty ocean, of God's altered plan.

Low art thou on thy bed—yon distant line,
O sea—is but a streak of purple waves;
Yet something links thee with the stars that shine

So far above, and peer into thy caves!

LOST IN ICELAND, AND OTHER POEMS.

INTRODUCTION.

AT night they come—these strange,
mysterious ghosts

That bring no sense of wonder, nor of
fear—

And yet we hear the waves of unknown
coasts,

The voices of a strange and unseen
sphere.

At night they come—with their unchanging
gaze,—

They look upon us, pale and sad of eyes,
Once more recall the scenes of other days,
Once more recall the light of other skies.

At night they come—we waken up from
sleep,

And see the stars set in the tranquil air—
And sometimes we may smile, but oftener
weep,

And wring our hands in sadness or
despair.

At night they come—nor know we *why*
they come,

Yet see the willowy form, the pointing
hand—

And fain would speak, and yet are ever
dumb,

And fain would ask, and yet dare not
command,—

They come at times when we shall not
escape,

They come in the sad WATCHES OF THE
NIGHT,

Robed in long drapery of lack-lustre crêpe,
Or in still more unearthly folds of
white—

Again—we know not whence they come,
nor why,

From what wild valley, or unfathomed
deep,

But look upon them with a heavy sigh,
And veil our faces with our hands—and
weep!

INTRODUCTORY I.—FAR, FAR AWAY.

FAR, far away will wander oft my soul
Into strange realms of beauty, or of
dread;

Now where the echoes of fierce battles roll,
Now where bright stars shine calmly
overhead.

But oft to that strange realm of the North
Pole,

Wherein, although the lightning quivers
still,

There shall no peal of thunder ever roll,
To wake the echoes of a frozen hill—

Wild, untamed creatures seek this place
alone—

The white bear strolls beneath the bril-
liant stars—

The sea-gull sits upon his ice-girt throne,
And hears no sounds of shipwrecks nor
of wars.

Shall it be *never* that the chill air warms
Upon those shores, or in yon moonlit
caves?

And rocks re-echo to the voice of storms,
And movement come back to the silent
waves?

Visions have come to man in some strange
hours—

There are those who look forward with
keen eyes,

Believing, through God's ever-mighty
powers,

That summer yet shall thaw those ice-
bound skies!

INTRODUCTORY II.—

YET FARTHER!

HERE in this realm—forgotten of all
time,

Where even the lightning hath laid down
its rod—

Here, where the silence even is sublime,
Behold no human presence and—no God!

Some say thou art too terrible for Hell!
So strangely shall thy frightful calm
appal,—

They who have known thee lack all words
to tell

The horror of despair that breathes o'er
all.

No echo—even from the sea, or shore—
A desolation hideous beyond speech—
A silence far more ghastly than the roar
Of war, or than a demon's hell-taught
screech.

Yes! hideous beyond words:—no living
forms

Are seen to move across the shroud-like
blocks

Of ice—nor is there ever rush of storms,
To wake the echoes of those glittering
rocks—

No movement in the air, nor in the white
And ghastly plains that meet a wan-
derer's eyes—

No change by day—nor change to mark
the night,—

Only the deadliness of silent skies—

PREFACE.—IN THE SHADOWS.

"My brain is sad and much o'erwrought—
And full of fancy—of dark thought—
Of long-remembered pains and fears,
Of heavy mists, of bitter tears—"

"That I may deem my grief no more
Than many have bewailed before,
I fain would tell of a despair
To which mine own can scarce com-
pare!—"

"That anguish of the maddened brain,
In which all skill of man is vain,
And love, itself, of no avail—
Humanity's most hopeless tale!"

"I speak of one, in years gone by,
First met beneath a foreign sky,
Tender of soul—of vivid brain—
Though full of talent, never vain—"

"Yes! gentle—courteous and refined,
And gifted with a generous mind—
To whom the hapless fortune fell,
Of loving madly, and—*too well!*"

LOST IN ICELAND.

It was in early summer time
I passed through Iceland's northern clime,
And paused beside a tomb of stone,
Upon whose frozen top were thrown
Hepatica of native blue—
Hepatica of rosy hue—
And snowdrop—with its drooping head,
And crocus, blushing orange-red.

They lay upon a mound of snow,
Not colder than the form below!
The stars that lit that place of rest
Were all the beacons it possessed!
While storms of winter swept the sky,
And from afar the fierce, wild cry
Of prowling wolf fell on the ear,
A fitting sound in place so drear!

Dark firs, of noble size and state,
Bent down beneath a frozen weight—
A deadly weight!—of dazzling snow,
That shadowed not the ground below!
And oft beneath that shelter stole—
Fit dweller at the Northern Pole—
A thing whose eye-ball's fiery spark,
Shone like a meteor in the dark!

It was the Arctic fox, whose eyes
Have all the warmth of southern skies—
The savage teeth—the crafty air—
The stealthy movement—all were there!
But when the distant bay of deer,
And sleigh-bell caught his listening ear,
Some fallen fir-tree's trunk he found,
And, silent, crouched upon the ground—

Yet found I not *one* simple name,
Beloved by friends, though not by fame!
Upon the grey, memorial stone,
One name was missing—one alone!
None knew the spot where lay at rest
A loving heart, a fearless breast,—
Lost in the silent world of white—
The regions of unnatural night!

That wanderer never home returned
To take the place his kinship earned;

Although with tired, despairing brain
They say he sought his home in vain—
No more his light, young footsteps trod
The Arctic mosses of that sod—
No more the pine-wood's dreary track,
The echoes of his steps sent back—

How should he ever reach that place,
So loved of old?—when not a trace
Of human life, by night, or day,
Is with him on his lonely way!
And savage bears may cross his path—
Nor shall there be the cheery hearth,
That throws such radiant pitch-pine light,
To shine out on this Northern night!

Oh! is this hell* the Arctic Sea,
Where neither love, nor life shall be—
This God-forsaken, silent place!
These death-like plains—with not a trace
Of human pathway o'er the wold—
Alas! how numbing is the cold!
How dense and thick the Polar fog—
How shrill the bark of Arctic dog!

Or is that the ferocious growl
Of lean and hungry wolves, that prowl
Beneath the gleaming "Milky Way,"
In savage search for helpless prey!—
That in so desolate a realm
Seems like a voice that might o'erwhelm,
Or madden, out of all control,
A solitary listener's soul—

"I know not where my footsteps lead—
There is one bourne I seek, indeed,
Where sleep my kindred—all alone,
Beneath grey sepulchres of stone.
That spot so loved, I fain would reach,
O'er frozen sea, o'er rocky beach,
That they may place me, when I die,
Where those that knew me silent lie."

His thoughts were wandering to the dead—
He scarcely marked the fog o'erhead—
He only wished, in truth, again
To see the spot where long had lain
The bones of those, so loved, so dear,
Who brightened once that ghastly sphere,
And made life even a life of grace,
And sweetness, in that fearful place!

There, by his kinsmen's side to sleep—
Where Russian violets fragrant keep,
And where the stars are far more bright,
Than in our realms of warmer light—
And where no sound of lowing herds
The wanderer's heavy sleep disturbs,—
Where only, when the night is dark,
Is heard the fox-dog's shrilly bark—

How vividly he now recalls
That spot, on which the gloom but falls,
Of fir—of forest fir—of size
Unknown save under Arctic skies—
Whose shadows—falling on the snow,
Are of a blackness strange to know;
As weird, and as intense they seem,
As those of some unearthly dream—

One little sister slumbers there,
Beneath that arched vault of despair,
From whence the stars keep faithful
guard,
While o'er the snow, so white, so hard,
The ermine wanders, in the light
Of that eternal, awful night!—
He, too, would slumber there, but how?
So far away from it as now!

Oh! realm of never-melting snow,
Where centuries come, where centuries go,
Nor leave indented even a trace
Of time, on that unyielding face—
Within whose calm, whose breathless sky,
There echoes never human cry—
From whose mysterious, gloomy spheres,
There come no sounds to listening ears—

Oh! realm unspeakably sublime,
Forgotten both by man and time—
Where human step hath rarely trod,
Forgotten, some have moaned—by God!—
Thy calm, thy ever-silent rocks
Reverberate no thunder shocks,
Aurora-borealis rays
Shine only through thy twilight haze—

The echo of no human voice
Can bid thy ghastly shores rejoice—
No human laughter—human cry,
Is given back from land, or sky,
Nor does the blue-black ice send back
One murmur from its glassy track,

* See Gustave Doré's wonderful painting of the Arctic Regions—"Il Inferno."

Of either beast, or human tread,
For even nature there lies dead!

The voice of man shall never tell
The secrets of that spot of earth;
For human life shall never dwell
Where there is known no human birth—
Where none can live, or live to die—
Where there is neither moan, nor sigh—
An unexplained, forgotten shore,
No step of ours shall dare explore!

With forces none can overwhelm,
Death guards the portals of that realm—
His powers are boundless as the space,
Nor can we even his footsteps trace
Upon the cold, unyielding ground—
Nor shall his voice of hollow sound,
His voice of terror, or of fear,
Fall on a listener's startled ear.

O! that, within a world like this,
So capable of human bliss—
So full of sweetness—and of joys
That death's hand, only, oft destroys—
That there should be so wide a space
Within its limits, where no trace
Of its Creator's loving hand
Is found, on either sea or land!

Ah, hush! this world has far too much
Of mystery for human touch!
Our narrowed thought, our febrile brain,
Can bear but faint, but guarded strain—
We see here with imperfect eyes,
We read not, from eternal skies,
What God deems fittest to bestow
Upon this unformed race below.

To us these mysteries are unknown,
Take thou the path marked here thine own,
Nor linger on thine earthly way,
Except to meditate—to pray.
Strain not these mysteries here to read,
But rather take a broader creed;
Yes, deem them once again too much
For human brain—for human touch—

Yet, even in this fearful place
They say that *once* was found the trace
Of human footsteps—seen and lost!—
In paths by even wolves uncrossed!
A legend of too bitter pain,
That told, shall one forget again—
Too full of strangeness, and too stern
With anguish to no more return—

For, in that realm—to man unkind,
Once wandered one—with wandering
mind—

Careless or reckless—till was seen
No mark where step of his had been.
He loved—not wisely! for his heart
Was one that yielded all—not part!
He loved, as some still love, even now—
Even in this world of sceptic brow—

Alas! he loved by far too well—
Or I had not this tale to tell—
He loved!—and Love can never burn
Like his but once—nor lost—return!
And if it dies—it slowly dies—
With fainting pulse, heartbroken sighs—
And when its sweet, bright dream is o'er,
This life shall seem *our* life no more!

She whom he loved, rejected less
With scorn, than that she calmly held
The wiser words of friendliness
Love's futile visions soon dispelled!
Yes! knowing that he loved her, yet
She deemed that he might soon forget—
And then would brighter ones replace,
In time, all memories of her face.

Ah, creed of but a feeble brain,
A hope like this indeed is vain!
Immortal as the soul of Life—
Surviving trouble, wrong, and strife,
Love fights his battles with the best—
Indomitable—slow to rest—
Unconquered by the tempest's breath,
The bondsman, here, of only—Death!

The eve was one of Northern light,
Not one of darkly growing night;
A smile that came from Heaven's own
face

Shone even o'er this savage place!
That seemed as only lingering there,
To save man's soul from such despair
That he would rather cast aside
His life, than in such realms abide!

Oh, in that boundless, voiceless scene,
God seems so great and man so mean!
One almost feels it might be worth
Some years of our short stay on earth,—
Yes! even of that uncertain span
God has allotted here to man,
To look *once* on so grand a sight,
As this hushed universe of white!

He, wandering in that realm of fear,
With strange, wild gaze, undimmed by
tear,
Looked up for neither moon nor star;
His thoughts were with a home afar!
In that dread world he stood alone—
The last white gull had homeward flown,
Winging its solitary flight
Into the growing Arctic night—

No billows, with their sullen moans,
Are there to wash the granite stones,
And echo through the silent air,
With the last moanings of despair!
And on the glittering, frozen snow,
A reindeer, passing long ago,
The only foot-mark left, impressed
Upon this place of ghastly rest!—

THE VALLEY BY THE SEA;

OR,

LOVE AND HATE.

A Tale in Four Parts,

INTRODUCTORY WORDS.

ONCE on a time I heard a piteous story!
No record, friend, of honour, love or
glory—
But human faults—aye, bitter faults re-
vealing—
A tale of sullen—of revengeful feeling!
Yet though so sad a legend, it is well
One, sometimes, such for thoughtful hours
should tell—
Thus teach some lesson that may trea-
sured be—
Therefore—I “tell the tale as told to
me!”

THE VALLEY BY THE SEA.

PART I.

By the blue waters boldly stands in sight
A rough-hewn rock, of noble shape and
height;

The fierce Atlantic breasts it, night and
day,
Though still its rugged strength maintains
its sway—
And near it, as sucked down by giant
lips—
Lie buried many of England's home-bound
ships!

One wild, tempestuous night a youth's
keen eyes
Had watched a slow but fearful storm
arise—
And as a hapless vessel struck that rock,
Vying with thunder with its echoing
shock,—
And fearful shrieks and cries were heard
to fill
The air, resounding back from rock and
hill—
He manned his Lifeboat, and, with gallant
breast,
And firm, cool brow that fear had ne'er
oppressed,
And voice of calm command: that fearless
boat
Upon the raging waves was soon afloat!
Then, through the winds and waters'
savage roar,
A drooping figure through the waves he
bore,
And left in safety on the higher sands,
Where kindly hearts and quick and ready
hands
Then carried to a certain furnished cot
One—thoughtful—had erected on that
spot—
And then at once, unweariedly applied
All well-known plans—and all resources
tried,
Until, from Death's mysterious, unknown
shore,
They brought her back to mortal life once
more!
While shrieks and piteous moans came
sweeping by
On each faint gust of the tempestuous sky,
As madly played the lightning, while the
dash
Of waves outdid the thunder's angry crash!

But when the terrors of the night had
passed,
When—as exhausted—slept the furious
blast—

Young Ronald sought that cot again and
 learned
 That life—though scarcely vigour—had
 returned
 With panting heart, with feeble, struggling
 breath,
 The shipwrecked turned back from the
 road to death!
 And he it was whom first she thanked,
 although
 Her face was almost set, her brow like
 snow—
 Yet still she struggled, if, with lips like
 clay,
 Some gentle words of gratitude to say,
 And oh! she had such sweet eyes and
 bright hair—
 Our hero could but think how wondrous
 fair!
 And, filled with calm content he sought
 the rest
 He well had earned, and by such labour
 blessed!

II.

A SUMMER morning dawns upon the
 world!
 Each vessel's heavy pennant is unfurled,
 And lightly floats upon the peaceful air,
 Catching each breeze that gaily wantons
 there.
 The waves subside upon the time-worn
 rocks—
 Their crash no more disturbs the sea-bird
 flocks,
 But o'er the sands retreat, still gently
 creeping
 Backwards and forwards, as though bent
 on sweeping
 Far out to sea, beyond all mourning sight,
 The savage ruin of that stormy night!

How peaceful! yet how short a time ago
 Seemed the sad wailings—hurrying to and
 fro—
 Wild, frantic eyes, imploring, wringing
 hands—
 Pale figures, flitting o'er the wreck-strewn
 sands!
 Hear now the ocean voices!—'tis the moan
 Of gentlest waters breaks the calm alone!
 And as the red sun rose above the waves,
 And pierced the shadows of the vaulted
 caves,
 To but a simple cot its light it lent,—

Then through an open casement softly
 went,
 And shone upon a girlish face that
 pressed
 A cottage pillow there—though scarce in
 rest!
 A death-like pallor, almost that of clay,
 Upon her unclosed lips and forehead
 lay—
 The dark and sunken eyelids marked the
 strain
 Of rest enforced — *shall they unclose
 again?*

Hours passed, ere yet the dark-fringed
 eyelids quivered,
 The pale lips moved, the slight frame
 gently shivered,—
 Once more those beautiful and tender
 eyes
 Looked gladly out upon the smiling skies.
 Nor need we tell how gleefully went back
 Her fresh young steps to Life's accus-
 tomed track—
 Only, that following swiftly that dark
 night
 Came many a day of happiness and
 light—
 And wandering in the moonbeams, calm
 and pale,
 Young Ronald told the everlasting tale!

III.

THERE is a valley near the western coast,
 Sheltered from all, except the mountain
 breeze,
 Whose sylvan beauty long had been the
 boast
 Of those who dwelt o'ershadowed by its
 trees—
 Where, crowning steepest slopes of chest-
 nut wood,
 A grey Elizabethan mansion stood,
 And o'er the calm scene held no modern
 sway—
 So picturesque it was—so worn—so grey!—
 From whose stone casements, framed by
 ivy green,
 The blue, far-stretching ocean could be seen.

But more than this a traveller had
 descried—
 Another mansion faced the other side—

Not vast as this, and yet so fair, withal,
That ofttimes he would pause beneath its
wall—

Built ages since, of grey, enduring stone—
By tufts of grass and lichen over grown—
To mark the sunset's last and glowing
smile

Light up the warm and venerable pile.
And she, the mistress of the western hall,
Oft sits and watches it at evenfall,
With eyes of concentrated hate and
spite—

Till it is veiled by shadows of the night !

They told that, while of yet but tender
years,

Two were betrothed, for whom were felt no
fears

Of change, for both were then untouched
in heart

And fancy—and were neighbours—scarce
apart.

And it was seen by all, the maiden's soul
Was Ronald's—even beyond her own
control.

Yet—though so fair, blonde Ethel wanted
still

Something — not hers — young Ronald's
heart to thrill !

Alas ! to him her love felt cold, if kind—
It neither touched his soul, nor stirred
his mind.

Yet he misjudged her, and was wholly
wrong—

Controlled it might be, yet that love was
strong—

And if she could all outward signs repress,
It had the tigress' savagery, no less !

Now Ronald, on one spring's delicious
day,

When wandering by himself, had missed
his way—

And found himself in an Arcadian grove,
The very place for musing and for love !

Where boughs of darkest pine and beeches
green,

Formed, interlaced, the thickest fairy
screen,

Around the sweetest of all fairy bowers ;
There slept a maiden—on a bank of
flowers !

She looked so sylph-like, and so wondrous
fair,

He almost fancied Flora slumbered there !

And feared to startle her, and yet she
heard

His steps, and, like a frightened wild-
wood bird,

Her blue eyes opened—filled with sudden
fear—

To find this youthful stranger standing
near !

So met these lovers first, and it were
vain

To count how oft their wandering steps
again

Sought this secluded, this bewitching
spot—

With her his vow to Ethel he forgot !

And though, since then, those early,
dream-like years

Might well have been wiped out by bitter
tears,

By Ethel's heart they were forgotten
never !

That wound in Ethel's heart would bleed
for ever !

Though even when love-despised so fiercely
glowed,

Her *hand* upon another she bestowed !

Thus, still, at night, her withering glance
would stray

To where the ocean washed the spreading
bay—

To see what shadows flecked its distant
blue,

What time the home-bound vessels bare
in view.

Till—one calm night, as motionless she sat,
To watch the dusky rook, the flitting bat,

A footstep sounded on the turf below,—
A voice was heard whose tone she well

might know,
And bronzed and brown, but bright-eyed

as of old,
Her son, her only son, her arms enfold !

Then came a thousand questions, and
not less

The praise—the blame—the smile and the
caress !

With what fond pride the mother hears
the tale

Of his wild venture through the stormy
waves

Of the Atlantic—how her cheek grows
pale

At thought of all his perils—as he braves
All danger in the joy of saving life—
Of snatching, from the mad, tempestuous
strife

Of sky and ocean, a “fair, lovely girl,
A young and gentle child, a very pearl
Of beauty”—so he pictures her!—the thrill
With which she hears the name, though
deeming still

’Tis but some strange coincidence—since
she,—

The daughter of her darkest enemy—
She fancies living now beyond yon vale—
O’er which the summer moon is rising—
pale

And sickly—gleaming through the evening
mist—

For no one of her household dared, I
wist,

To bring her tidings of that hated spot!
And like Virginia—of far earlier times,
Sweet Marie spent her youth in foreign
climes—

And in fair France was spent her child-
hood’s years—

To France belonged her early smiles and
tears—

All these were of a sunny land—away
From sterner shores, and skies more pale
and grey.

Her heart was light, her spirits unsub-
dued

By the sad story of her parent’s feud
And early hatreds—at her girlish age
They kept, unread by her, that bitter
page.

So did this mother, one soft evenfall,
Bid him to bring the maiden to the hall—
And thus a fair young form was seen to
pass,

Through a long corridor of old stained
glass,

To where a lady near the entrance stood—
Robed—richly robed—in velvet dress and
hood.

But as she turned on her her gracious eyes,
That look changed into one of fierce
surprise—

And as the word of welcome she would
speak

With gracious smiles—that word became a
shriek!—

That sounded like the plaint of a lost
soul,

Tortured beyond repression or control—
Her shrill, wild accents, echoing through
the hall,
The very maids and servitors appal!

“How darest thou come here, how darest
thou!

False both of heart and lip, if fair of brow,
O smiling face! but heart of coldest stone—
Vile witch! how darest thou come here—
Begone!”

And then she wrang her hands and wildly
fled,

And left, behind, the silence of the dead!
Neither dared speak, but sought each
other’s eyes,

With looks of strangest fear and sad
surprise.

“My mother surely must be strangely ill!”
At last said Ronald, as a fearful thrill
Ran through his frame—and then he
turned his look

On Marie—felt how her slight figure
shook

With terror, and pressed fondly in his own
The hand that now felt lifeless as a stone!

“Oh! that a welcome, thou, like this,
should’st meet!

But rest—rest thy too weary frame—my
sweet!

Lay thus thy weary head—the while I
seek

My mother—and full sternly will I speak!”
But yet—so bitterly her soul was stirred—
It needed many a loving tender word,
Ere he could soothe the terror of her
brain,

And bring the rose to her white cheek
again.

Like most of us, she feared the unfixed
eye,

The wild forms of a lost mind’s agony—
But bravely still her shrinking thoughts
repressed,

And hid her tears upon her lover’s breast

IV.

Now in this mansion was a spacious room,
Of brightness rarely—oftener wrapt in
gloom,—

Or lit by somewhat of a sickly light—
There, in a late hour of that fatal night,

Slowly and sternly—with no tears to flow—
A woman told the story of her woe—
Her love — desertion, and her bitter
wrong—
And in that interview, so sad—so long—
She told of all the agony, the tears—
The blight of all her happy, youthful
years,
That girl's false mother to her life had
brought,
The bitter, hopeless misery she had
wrought,
Then harshly said—

“ . . . These words shall be the
last
My lips shall utter on that hateful past!
I will not look again upon that face—
It hath its mother's cruel—wicked grace.
Oh! never—never shall she be thy bride!
Ah—would—ere thou had'st asked me, I
had died!
She is—again—the woman, for whose sake
He—mine own lover—left my heart to
break!
Oh! can'st thou be my son, yet think so
light
The wrongs that my whole life have served
to blight!
Know, then—*that I would rather see him
dead,*
Than son of mine should Hester's daughter
wed!”

“Mother, be calm! thou art indeed un-
just!
Nay! hear me for one moment—speak I
must.
I love this girl—thou, by *thyself* must
know
How strongly love in thy son's heart may
glow.
I am that son! my heart, like thine, is
strong
In all its passions and can brook no wrong.
I can no more relinquish her than thou
Once yielded *him*! remembered even now!
I will *not* yield my love up to a scorn,
And hate, that of a wrong, *not hers*, was
born!”

“Thou wilt not—thou—my son! thou
dost defy
My love—my hate!” she said—with
sparkling eye—

“Then—my past years of hope have been
in vain!
Go! and once gone—*we never meet
again!*”

Her words are shrill with madness and
despair—
Nor can he soothe her, as her yet fair hair
She tears out madly from its twisted bands,
And loosens it with fierce and trembling
hands—
Her shrieks re-echo to the distant hall—
The past o'erpowers her with its mad
recall.

Night falls on that abode of dark
distress,
The owl comes hooting from his loved recess,
The bats go flitting in and out the pines,
And over all the bright moon calmly
shines!
And peace and rest the house seems now
to win—
But oh! what grief, what madness reigns
within
Those walls! so ancient and so calm and
grey!
Those towers! lit calmly by that peaceful
ray!

V.

SADLY when morning broke the lovers
met—
And Marie's lips were pale, her eyes
were wet
With unshed tears, and tears too freely
shed—
And on his breast she gently laid her head.
“Marie—beloved one! hide not thus thy
brow,
O! as thou lov'st me, dearest, hear me
now!
We yet will bring back happiness, once
more
To reign in this sad dwelling as before!
When, missed with sorrow from our
mother's gaze,
She, too, will long for brighter, calmer
days—
And so, repentant, call us home again,
So peace and calm content once more shall
reign!
O Marie! thou art dearer to me far
Than home, ambition, wealth and country
are!

So—love—it is my life for which I plead—
My heart that torn from thee must ever
bleed—

Should'st thou reject that life, that is
thine own,

I shall, on earth, be evermore alone.

God never meant for us so cruel a fate

As thus to love and thus to separate!

Love! we will trust the treacherous deep
once more,

And leave, if but a while, our native
shore—

And in the silent hours to come, that part

This time and that—perchance my mother's
heart

Will soften to her children—will have
grown

To think of them as both—yes! *both*—her
own!

From Heaven itself that lesson she may
learn—

And then—forgiven—we may yet return!"

"Ah love! I dare not listen to thy
voice—

Dear love—I dare not bid my heart
rejoice!

Such fears—O! dearest, still my heart
appal!

I dare not tear thee from thy home—from
all

That is thine own . . . !"

" . . . In vain thy sweet lips plead,
Against thy heart, love, thou shalt scarce
succeed—

My love is no frail blossom, but a rock,
That shall withstand the tempest's rudest
shock!"

So some long hours of bitter woe went
by—

Full of pale grief, of sad tears hard to
dry—

Then—when all hope of peace and pardon
passed,

They sailed — how sadly sailed! — from
home at last.

There was a lofty turret from whose
height

The ocean's pale-blue space was yet in
sight—

And oft-times one could see a distant line
Of ships against that mist-like mark
define—

So loftily it stood, the peaceful cry
Of home-bound rook but sounded as a
sigh!

And once, at summer evening's closing
hour,

The maidens sought their mistress in that
tower—

Her head in silence on her arm was
bowed—

Gently they called her—then in tones more
loud.

Repentance — anger — sorrow — all were
o'er—

That proud, unhappy heart could beat no
more!

My tale is ended—night is dark and
deep—

God only can forgive—we sigh and weep!

So close the curtains with departed day,

The night approaches—let us watch and
pray.

THE CHURCHYARD BY THE SEA.

A TRADITION.

INTRODUCTION.

WANDERING through England's western
lands, one day,

I saw a mansion, ancient—large—and grey,
Stand out upon the summit of a hill,
Where, doubtless, curious eyes may find
it—still!—

And being graciously allowed to see
The antique beauties it contained—to me
Permission full of charm—I wandered
through

Its noble rooms, rose-coloured—grey—or
blue—

Painted in faded colours, with a look
Of old-world, ghastly legends in each
nook—

And something like a strange, unearthly
scent,
Seemed following my rude footsteps as I
went!

But what most charmed me was a portrait,
hung
In one fair room, about whose look there
clung
A strange, wild look, as though some
piteous tale
Had marked that brow—that brow so
sweet—so pale!

I asked the chattering beldam of the place,
Whose form was bent, whose scanty hair
was grey—
Whose blear eyes and whose deeply
wrinkled face
Seemed as a part of all that weird decay—

If she could tell me *what*, upon that face,
Had left so ghastly and so wild a trace!
And *why* one saw, instead of girlish
bloom,
Almost the shadow of the darkest tomb!

“And that, good truth, it was! I knew her
well!
She lived, Sir, as beneath a demon’s
spell—
And if you care so sad a tale to hear,
Sir—I can tell it truly—never fear!”

And so, though scarcely in the old dame’s
word
And manner, shall be told the tale I
heard—
A tale whose sorrows had full long been
mute—
Now—wakened only by a tuneless lute!

But first I gazed upon that face once
more—
So darkly painted!—seeing, as before,
That the mysterious lines indented there
Were lines of earth’s most terrible despair!

THE CHURCHYARD BY THE SEA;

OR,

A STRANGE QUEST.

FAIR Eva was a joyous child,
Her step was light, her eye was wild,
And glistened with so bright a hue,
The very sky was paler blue!
A beautiful, but wayward girl,
Who neither cared for gem nor pearl,

But searched her wildest, native dells,
For eglantine, or fairy bells,
To grace her hair of warmest brown—
Whose rippling tresses, hanging down,
With many a bright, coquettish twist—
Though never yet by lover kissed—
Like veil of gold enwrapt her round,
Until they reached the very ground!

Without a shadow night—or day—
That careless childhood passed away;
And Eva then began to feel,
That deeper thoughts, at times, would
steal

Unconsciously across her mind,
Nor seldom left a gloom behind!
Her blue eyes, losing their free gaze,
Shone with the thoughts of deepening
days.

No more she sought Carthullin’s glade,
Where roses bloomed, in fragrant shade—
But rather chose to sit for hours
Beneath its castle’s ivied towers,
To hear the night-owl’s eirie call,
To watch the gloom of evening fall,
As slowly the red sun went down,
Behind the woods of russet brown.

But childhood passed; and with those
years,
A subtle change o’er Eva crept—
Her dark eyes often filled with tears,
Though none could fathom *why* she wept!
’Tis true she still was sweet and fair—
Still shrouded in her glowing hair!—
But sorrow the sad brow was shading,
The bloom upon her cheek was fading—
And as the days wore slowly by,
The brightness left her tear-dimmed eye.

There flowed through Eva’s clear, blue
veins,

The proudest blood in Scotia’s land,
And many came from hills and plains,
To seek to win that haughty hand.
But Eva was not lightly won!
They *thought* her heart was reached by
none!

Her love seemed but for woodlands
deep!—

Where she could sit, alas! and weep—
Until at last her kinsman swore,
That, ere another month passed o’er
That drooping and averted head,
Some chieftain should young Eva wed!

Fair Eva's heart, in truth, was given
 To one of low, of humble birth—
 For Oscar scarcely owed to Heaven
 One rich, one worldly gift on earth!
 And oh! her love was all to him—
 To whom all other eyes seemed dim—
 To whom all other hearts seemed cold,
 Yet—his were spirits high and bold,
 And when war came, for Scotland's right
 He left his rustic home to fight,—
 And Eva, from her turret tower,
 Sat watching with a tearless eye,
 The passing of each weary hour—
 Each season of despair pass by.

But when they prayed that she should
 wed,
 And swore her love had long been dead,
 That she had better far believe
 It was but useless thus to grieve—
 That he was buried far away—
 Where storms swept o'er him—night and
 day—
 Her heart grew wild and almost broke—
 "That last, long home of which you spoke—
 Oh, I will find"—she wailed—"that spot—
 For wed another *I will not!*"

So, one autumnal, chilly night,
 Led faintly by the cold moonlight—
 She left her home, on its ascent,
 And down Carthullin's hill she went,
 Until she reached, beyond its base,
 A plain of trees—the weirdest place!—
 The wind moaned through the forest
 vast—
 The leaves fell rustling o'er her head—
 The dry twigs snapped beneath her tread—
 And Eva heard them, as she passed—
 And Eva stayed—once only—stayed—
 The rash steps hurrying through the glade,
 To look again upon her home;
 And ah! what piteous thoughts would
 come
 With that despairing, parting gaze—
 What thoughts of earlier, happier days!

The moon above the still, dark scene,
 Was rising—cloudless, bright, serene—
 The stars stole slowly to the sky,
 The wind was scarce above a sigh.
 The very night our sages love,
 When they can watch the planets move
 O'er heaven's blue vault, in stately round,
 As though they moved to music's sound!—

A night when all is hushed—is *mute*—
 Save—one might hope—a lover's lute!
 When Poets dream of fleeting Fame—
 The Statesman, of a world-known name—
 When stern Remorse brings back the fears
 And griefs—that haunt our wasted years!—

The heavy pines that closed around,
 Shut out the moonbeams from the
 ground—
 And barely did the cold night breeze
 Move the dark drapery of those trees—
 The dead, deep silence was unstirred,
 By even a beetle, or night-bird.
 And yet the boughs that o'er her frowned,
 Seemed rocking, though without a
 sound!—

As certain forms, with cold, glazed eye,
 And hues of death came floating by,
 Yet Eva did not stop, nor turn—
 Her purpose was by far too stern—

She cared not, even if there came
 The spirit with the evil name,
 That all of us are taught to dread—
 Nor if it raised the ghastly dead!
 Her blood with heroes' blood was
 blended—
 From royal lines had *she* descended!

Deeper o'er wood, o'er field and plain,
 The shadows of the night were creeping—
 The moon sank on the ocean main,
 Whose very waves seemed strangely sleep-
 ing—

She paused upon the water's verge,
 Where faintest fretting of the surge
 Against grim barriers of grey stone,
 Had something in its very tone
 So strangely desolate and deep,
 That few could hear it and not weep!

She turned away again, and then
 Her footsteps crossed a dreary glen—
 "Ah!" muttered she, "if he is dead,
 His tomb I yet shall find, I said!
 No matter—if beneath the wave,
 Or on the rocks his unkept grave,
 Or on the moorlands or the hill—
 No matter—I *shall find it still!*"

There was a churchyard near the shore,
 In reach of Ocean's stormy roar—
 In sight of Ocean's foaming crest—
 Yet seeming full of peace and rest—

It seemed to passers-by a spot
By living turmoil troubled not—
There lay a grave—one placed alone,
Unmarked by even a cross of stone—
Nor was there record, was there name,
To hint the sleeper's life or fame—
No! not a word was traced, to show
What he had been, who slept below!

Yet, o'er that last, long home of clay,
A passer-by, at break of day,
A slight and girlish figure found,
That lay, as slumbering, on the ground—
Her face was pale, her brow was cold,
And yet it wore a smile, that told,
No sorrow had she felt, at least,
From life's hard bonds to be released!

So there she slept in peace, nor came
A stranger, with the kindred's claim,
To weep o'er that cold mound of rest,
Where some one, lonely and unblest,
Slept, near the ocean-storm and wind,
The last, unbroken slumber of our kind!

THE MISCHIEVOUS COQUETTE;

OR,

LOST AT SEA.

(Told by request of a *Melancholy Spirit*.)

"AH! tell me, in these WATCHES OF THE
NIGHT,
Some tale of sorrow — of despair — of
gloom—
Speak not to me of laughter, joy, and
light—
Life is a dream—the earth, a dust-filled
tomb!"

INTRODUCTION.

TRULY, there was a tale I lately heard,
Worth, some, at least, might think, a
passing word
Of sorrow, of regret—and yet, it seems
One common as our lives, or as our
dreams!

Forsooth, these last have little, as *I* feel,
One-half so dark as some have found the
real!—
For life is sadder than romance—is far
More full of passion that most "fictions"
are—

And from mine earliest days "unto these
last,"
I know well that some lives shall be
o'ercast
By clouds that form, that rise from—none
know where,
Yet darken not the less our summer air—

Ah—yes! with griefs as bitter and as sad—
With the wild phantasies of thoughts as
mad—
With as intricate sins, mistakes, and
crimes,
As darkened days of more "romantic
times"!

THE MISCHIEVOUS COQUETTE;

OR,

LOST AT SEA.

A Tale.

"SHE was a foolish, silly girl," they said—
"And one possessed of little heart, or
head—
And yet," they added, "sooth! it was a
pity!—
Though neither kind, nor tender—wise,
nor witty,
She had such long, bright hair and plead-
ing eyes—
Lit up with such sweet, *innocent* sur-
prise!—
With soft entreaty, or pretended grief—
Lit with a *thousand* cheating lights, in
brief,
That none could look upon that lovely face
And dream her heart deficient—both in
grace
And truth,—for *falsehood in coquetting*
lies—
The coquette is a Fiend in Love's disguise!
She cared not—she! it was *her play*—that
all
She met of gallant youth, should feel her
thrall—

'Twas not *her* fault they loved her!—why,
indeed,
Should *she* be blamed, what foolish hearts
might bleed!

Her vanity was tickled by the first
Who wooed her; yet that fault was scarce
the worst—

For when a second followed, with a suit
Intense and full of madness, in pursuit,
She lured him onwards, to her very
shame,

By softly breathing oft his rival's name!
Would this were all,—but there is more to
tell!

She showed that lover's letter—!

With a yell

Of rage young Aldred left her, uttering
wild

And savage threats of vengeance.—She—
but smiled!

It was in later hours, at red sunset,
That rival in a lonely glen he met—
He, also, showed—exultingly, a note,
Which Nilda in some foolish moment
wrote.

Of what had been between them Aldred
knew

But little—yet his rage to fury grew!
And afterwards! he scarcely seemed to
to know

What passed between them—save a word—
a blow!

One fell—without a single cry, or sound—
Fell as a stone falls—heavily to ground.

Then Aldred left him, for he thought
him dead!

And in that moment's sudden madness
fled,

As though he were another Cain! and
went,

All heedless where his cursèd footsteps
bent.

They led him to the sea-shore, as it
chanced,

Where countless flags in summer breezes
danced—

Where many a noble vessel idly breasted
The fitful breeze, or calm at anchor
rested.

And wearily the outcast took his place,
And cast his thoughts on some mad ocean
race—

And in the unaccustomed scenes around
him,
Sought to forget the hideous cords that
bound him!

Yet still they were not free, nor careless
days—

For he was strange and fitful in his ways—

And soon his comrades shunned him, as
they thought

His mind in some dark manner was o'er-
wrought.

And ofttimes in the moonlight he would
stand

And point at—"Something"—with his
shaking hand,

And with dry lips, and face all ashen grey,
Would strive to warn some unseen Thing
away!

Moreover, when the evening hours drew
near,

Or, yet more late, the midnight chimes of
fear,

Strange, ghostly tales, in ghostly tones, he
told,

That would have made more timid brows
turn cold!

But they were rough, rude men, though oft
they had

Much superstition; they but thought him
mad—

Not haunted, yet! and gave him wider
range,

Still deeming him not dangerous, but
strange—

So left him to his own devices, went
Each one his own accustomed way, and
spent

Their leisure thoughts upon some daily plan
Of life, nor heeded much the lonely man.

There was one night—a night some still
remember,

A bright, but chilly night—in cold Decem-
ber,—

The wind blew wildly—in the moonbeams
pale

Flapped the grim length of many a long
sea-sail,

When Aldred neared a seamen's group and
spoke—

His voice, at first, hoarse, as a raven's
croak!—

Then to tones rising, shrieking, madly
clear,

So all who heard him shrank from him
with fear—
"Why dost thou haunt me, fiend! I slew
thee not!
What right had'st thou in that accursed
spot
Wherein I met thee, in the darkening
storm,—
As one protecting Nilda's graceful form—
'Twas false to swear her love had been
thine own—
O! wretch! to honour and to truth un-
known—
Thou dost deserve whatever voice shall
shame thee—
And only just the fate that overcame thee—
Pretending we were friends—O cur! and
then,
To take the crooked path of vilest men—
To seek to rob me—of mine own—to take
My love away—her heart and mine—to
break,"—

Then sank his voice to muttering—and
askance
They eyed him, with a furtive, frightened
glance—
And as he threw his arms out from his
breast,
They looked to see the spirit he ad-
dressed!
No ghastly "Thing" was there—but clear
moonlight
Showed out the heavy shadows of mid-
night—
And silently they watched, nor cared to
speak—
And even fancied that the sea-gull's shriek,
Just then, was of some spirit foully lost,
Or by some mad, relentless furies tossed!
Ere long they slunk away and left him
there—
To his own thoughts of madness and
despair!

Again, one night, when blustering winds
had passed
Into a sullen and a fitful blast—
Whose breath was as a dagger—sharp and
keen—
Just as the pallid rising moon was seen—
And while the ships rolled gently—side
from side—
Through the half-ghostly silence, madly
cried

A piercing voice—
"O! Spirit! foul and dread!
How did'st thou break the bondage of the
dead!
How did'st thou from thy prison-house get
free—
Am I for ever to be cursed by thee!
No! thou shalt not escape me *now*—at
least—
And I from thy vile chains shall be re-
leased!"

A sudden splash into the waves was
heard,
A moment and their gloomy depth was
stirred—
And then—once more they settled in their
place!
And the huge ship went forward—on its
race—
As the dark waters, in the midnight
gloom,
Rolled slowly, calmly—o'er the madman's
tomb!

CONCLUSION.

POOR wretch! not many years had rolled
away
Ere on one calm, one peaceful summer's
day,
Towards evening's close, I entered once
again
The dark, still woods of Wylder's rich
domain—
And underneath a whispering aspen tree,
Sat Wylder!—with his son upon his knee!

He had not died, as Aldred thought,
beneath
The heavy swoon that so resembled death!
And though his strength was wasted, so
that still
He was a sickly creature, with a will
But half-recovered, she—in grief and
shame—
That girl of thoughtless folly—gladly came
To nurse him—then at last she loved him
well,
Even in his weakness!—such the tale they
tell.
He had survived a cruel and dastard blow—
They said—'twas well that they no more
might know!—

And that by Mercy's gentle hand concealed,
Some awful fates are never here revealed.
Enough—they met—the dark sad days
were o'er,
Nor were they, in this world, divided more.

Ah! there are sad things in this world of ours—
Wild storms of passion—mis-employ of powers—
With wasted strength—and overpowering pain—
The broken heart and the disordered brain—
And sadly some remember still, that boy—
Poor Aldred—with his young heart full of joy—
So warmly loved by all! nor comprehend
Why he was doomed to meet so foul an end!

A 'DARK' PICTURE;
OR,
EVIL CLOUDS BY THE WAY.

THEY saunter down the same broad street,
They note her faint and weary feet;
They see her dark eyes filled with tears,
Her pale brow lined, but not with years—

They cannot gauge that bitter woe—
The anguish that lies, veiled, below—
In truth they have not skill to read
How bitterly her heart may bleed—

They know not why a life, still young,
Should be by such dark sorrow wrung;
They seem to understand no trace
Of past despair—upon that face;

They cannot turn that blighted page—
Blighted by something worse than age—
By lines that neither now, nor late,
Shall future years irradiate—

And if they see, they only slight
The many silver lines of white
That, with a sadder lustre, mark
Those tresses once so brightly dark—

Yet they may dream not they are cruel—
Their hearts may simply need the fuel

To feed a certain, holy flame
Of which they barely know the name—

They do not seem to even know,
The thrill of sympathy's warm glow—
That sympathy all feel so sweet—
From hearts that with *our* sorrows beat—

It is a privilege not theirs
To help another's woes and cares—
They look, with something more akin
To scorn, on sickness, even as sin!—

They lack the sense—the feelings fine,
The woes of others to define—
And it is true that there are some
To whom the voice of pain is dumb—

The pain by other sufferers borne—
The fetters by another worn—
These are the sadder trials of clay,
From which they—dully—turn away.

They stand apart—they are alone—
To them the Highest is unknown—
They take in life, its common ways,
Through light that is of common days—

There is no glow of fires divine,
No holy flame, no glorious shine—
Their lives assume not, at their close,
A look of Heaven-sent repose—

But rather is there *something*—there—
The slumber of the stagnant air—
The undisturbed and soulless rest,
That, though so calm—shall be unblessed!

THE UNKNOWN TRAMP.

HE came back from a foreign sea,
Again he felt his path was free—
He knew no thought but one—once more
To seek that home so loved before—

Ah! *to return!* that word so dear,
And yet to some a word of fear!
Return—but oh! to *what* return—
Is it some sweet reward to earn—

Some glory?—waited for so long,
With nerves so patient and so strong—
That shone through all the mist of tears,
That else had darkened his young years—

Return! and to how strange a spot!—
A frail, a ruined woodland cot—
O'er whose low roof of thatch entwine
The slender arms of eglantine—

A spot once fragrant with sweet flowers,
Where Love might linger—countless hours,
With silent lip, but speaking eye,
Nor note how time was gliding by—

Slowly the evening shades depart—
Those shades steal, also o'er his heart,—
And yet he still will linger there—
His only comrade was—despair!—

And still his eyes will wander o'er
A spot once known, but known no more,—
A spot so changed—he knew not how,
Or why—ah me! what mattered now!—

O eyes!—that tears had oft made dim,
That once were dear—*too* dear to him,
Why will their light return again—
Each glance so full of love—of pain—?

How eloquently he had pleaded,—
Although with eloquence unneeded—
That she would doubt not—nor forget
Though parted, they were lovers yet—

"This — trust!" — he drew her to his
heart,—

"My own belov'd one, if we part
It shall not, cannot be for long—
And Love is patient—Love is strong—

"And though this hour we part in pain—
God willing—we shall meet again,
Ere many years have glided by,
With brighter sunlight in the sky—"

These words return to him—but how?
They bring no gladness to his brow—
In truth—like other, *wiser* men,
He had not paused to ponder *when*!

But, like his fellows—of all days—
Though treading not in royal ways,
He trusted with the trust so blind—
The mad, wild trust of young mankind!

"Oh! would that he could but recall
The past—its joys—its sorrows—all!"—
He murmured, as the sun went down
Behind a melancholy frown—

A bank of such impervious mist,
Its brilliant rays had only kissed
One portion of its upper rim—
And left the rest to shadows dim—

Yet evening's gloom was lighter than
The brows of that unhappy man—
The dreary shadow of unrest
Weighed, even as lead, upon his breast—

Those days that seemed so long ago!
Those days that seemed so full of woe!—
Yet when but seldom was the trace
Of tears upon her gentle face!

He said he could not wed her *then*,
To take amongst his fellow-men,
To bring her where she could but grace,
So very, *very* mean a place!—

A merely rude and rustic cot,
Built in a God-forsaken spot,
With aspect so forlorn and poor,
With latticed window—latticed door—

And she must clothe in robes more fair,
And dress, in fashion's form, her hair!
Not be in meagre garb arrayed,
But even in one of velvet made!—

Or muslin—from the Indian loom—
Fit to adorn a royal room!
Even fit, if robe could *ever* be,
To grace a maiden fair as she!

Yes! *she* must live as queens of old,
Amidst the grace, or pomp, of gold;
Yes! she in regal halls must dwell—
But who, ah! *who*—shall work this
spell?

This spot of solitude and blight—
Oh! can *this* be the realm of light,
So long remembered in his dreams?
How small, how drear—how dark it seems!

Is *this* the spot where she had clung
So passionately to his breast—
When he had prayed, with faltering tongue,
Her fears for him to be at rest!—

For still those words return to him,
Through vistas dreary now, and dim—
"It shall not, cannot be for long,
And Love is patient—Love is strong."

And, standing thus, he whispered still—
As if unconscious of his will,
“Ah! can this be the very same,
Or hath it only kept its name?”

“*That cot I knew so long ago—*
With all its early roses’ glow,
So beaming round its rustic door—
And o’er its window trellised o’er—

“Yon stately building, broad and tall,
With noble windows, entrance hall—
With lofty height and rounded dome,
Bears no resemblance to *her* home!”

Alas! alas! where, then, is *she*?
Look yonder!—where the dark yew-tree
Throws its long shadow o’er the grass,
Where none but reverent steps must pass!

Oh! how her parting words return,
And seem his very heart to burn—
“Ah! leave me not, dear love!” *she* said,
As on his breast she laid her head—

“I feel, alas! so desolate!—
So many years, it seems, to wait!
If thou dost leave me I shall die”—
She murmured, with a weary sigh.

He stooped to pick a little flower,
Remembered even in that drear hour,—
A flower that she had loved so well—
Only the “*Canterbury bell!*” *

Though all her other pets had gone,
This, as it chanced, still lived—alone—
Though all its sister flowers lay dead,
These bell-like blossoms were unshed!

With something more than tenderness,
With streaming eyes—with wild caress,
He gathered it, and laid it where
Beat the wild throbs of his despair—

“Thy voice I hear not, with its tone
Of tenderness for *me*—alone:
Ah! it is idle now to weep—
So sleep, my love! *I, too, will sleep!*”—

For what was *now* his gold to him?—
Her lips were cold, *her* eyes were dim;

She could not praise his labours *now*,
Nor press her dear lips on his brow—

Nor listen fondly to the tales
Of hope, that true love never fails
To gild with such a glorious hue—
A light for ever fresh and new—

No! they can reach not her dull ear—
To bring the questions once so dear,
The soft, compassionating sigh,
The tear-drop to her dark, grey eye.

* * * * *

Silent and cold in death *he* lay,—
And when one passed, at close of day,
He went by with untroubled tread—
“Only some unknown Tramp”—*he* said.

DREAMS AND SONGS OF DESPAIR.

INTRODUCTORY.

AN EVIL SPIRIT.

DESPONDENCY! an evil spirit thou—
To some more grim than death!
Madness is darkly written on thy brow—
Thou freezest even our breath—

Thine icy touch shall surely paralyse—
Thy steps are dull and slow—
There is no movement in thy heavy eyes,
And on thy cheek no glow—

Thy form is yet more shadowy than
despair—

Thy voice is faint in tone;
Where *thou* may’st dwell abideth nothing
fair—

A deadly blight alone—

They see, who look into thy dull, grey
face,

Life’s joys have neared their end—
No hope can any on thy sad brow trace—
Death is thy dearest friend—

Thy narrow, dreary bed in on a hearse—
A dark pall o’er thee spreads—
Man meeteth little of a greater curse
On any path he treads—

* This was the name of a favourite old-fashioned flower in the neighbourhood of—, county of—
where this legend was told.

And he who stands to listen, in thy
track,
Hears but the funeral bell—
And he who follows thee, nor turneth
back,
Goes surely down to hell!

A SIGH!

ALAS! the sadness of life—to see the young
flowers die!—

The flowers that might for years in the
sunlight bloom,
Cut down by the breath of a cold and
blighting sky,
And gathered together in one unfragrant
tomb!—

'Tis true we pray in a fairer land they
rest—

Where the skies are ever glorious and
clear—
That the home wherein they dwell, at last,
is blest,
Untroubled by all the storms that sadden
here.

But still, as we look to the Heavens above,
we weep;
For we cannot pierce that broad,
enormous dome,—
One hears no voice from a silence strangely
deep,
To tell us where are our dear ones'
distant home!

Not even a sigh on the wild and wandering
wind,
Though we listen, ever so sadly, cometh
back,
Not a feather dropped from an angel's
wing we find,—
No token of love upon their unknown
track—

We know not, here, that their souls are
ever stirred
By the sigh of human bitterness and
care—
Or that in Heaven above is ever heard
The bitter cry of an earthly soul's
despair!

THE VALLEY OF DREAMS.

(THE LONELY VALLEY.)

Recalled by an old Sketch.

FAR in the western coast of our fair land
There is a valley—full of gloomy trees—
Trees that were planted there by Nature's
hand,
That ever sigh and murmur to the breeze.

From all the jarring noises of the town—
From even village life it lies apart—
So calm its solitude—so sad its frown—
A spot to please, alone, the poet's
heart—

And there stood once a mansion of past
days,
And, it may be, still holds its ancient
place—
Meeting a passing traveller's curious gaze
With a sad greyness and mysterious
grace.

They say it often rocks upon the ground!—
And startled travellers hear—in passing
by,
At times, the strangest wailing—as the
sound
Of some imprisoned spirit's hapless cry!

And sometimes still—in midnight's eerie
dream,
That valley is remembered — fair as
when,
In spring the gentle and half-hidden stream
Went rippling, softly, down the shady
glen—

And some day memory shall recall each
tale
That hath been whispered of that
ghostly spot—
Such as shall make the listener's cheek
turn pale—
While murmuring — "Would Heaven I
had heard them not!"

For wild indeed the legends one remembers
Of ghosts that round the towers still
flit about—
Told in the evenings of our dark Decem-
bers,
What time the embers of the fire die
out—

No! it is not in garish hours of day,
 But when the sky is stormy, dull, and
 grey,
 When one sits shivering at the eerie blast—
 One loves to tell the legends of the
 past!

A HIDEOUS DREAM.

How long, she knew not—but deprived of
 thought
 And movement she remained, yet suffered
 nought
 Of pain—her thoughts now frozen and
 unmixed
 With selfish fears—on *him*, alone, were
 fixed—

There was no moon to cheer that ghostly
 scene—
 Those broad, low-lying plains,—what there
 had been
 Of light, or what she *fancied* had been,
 now had faded—
 By heavy shadows the grim scene was
 shaded—

The heavy midnight clouds crossed and
 recrossed
 The dreary sky, until all light was lost—
 And through their broken spaces shone no
 star
 To look down on what *seemed* a field of
 war—

“It was no dream—I knew well it was
 thou!
 Not only by the calm—the broad, low
 brow,
 But by that mournful gaze of old, I knew
 Lit up those thoughtful eyes of tender
 blue—

“*Now*—hast thou vanished!—*now* I see
 thee not!—
 I stand upon a strange and unknown
 spot—
 Alas! I cannot follow thee, nor know
 Where—in this world of mystery—thou
 may’st go!”—

She felt bewildered—both in heart and
 brain—
 And deemed she saw strange shapes, un-
 seen before—

That seemed to move across a far-off
 plain—
 Then vanish, near the ocean’s rock-bound
 shore—

But still her thoughts—confused—could not
 absorb
 The meaning of the scene that round her
 lay—
 Once more she looked up for the moon’s
 lost orb—
 And something reached her of a sickly
 ray—

And then she saw a star sink—slowly
 sink—
 And strove to rouse herself—to rouse to
 think
 Why she was lost upon that lonely
 place—
 Where there was not of living thing a
 trace—

She turned to look for some familiar
 sight,
 But only strangeness met her gaze again—
 Then downward glanced—and saw a face
 of white,
 Look upwards from amongst a heap of
 slain—

His eyes stared at her with a shocking
 stare—
 And on the forehead lay the blood-stained
 hair—
 And, though not with *his* smile of old,
 it seemed,
 Through the stiff, parted lips the white
 teeth gleamed—

Could nothing warm again that frozen
 breath—
 Awake him from that seeming sleep of
 death!—
 None who could help her, who, like her,
 had loved,
 None—in that ghastly solitude, who moved!

No sound! no voice!—and yet she seemed
 to hear
 The booming of strong billows—far, not
 near—
 Then suddenly a loved—familiar tone
 She heard—a hollow, a heartbreaking
 moan—

Still o'er that pallid face—so hard, so strange,
 There seemed to pass nor movement,
 light, nor change—
 Oh! God of mercy, and shall never more
 That dear face look as it hath looked
 before!

She could not tell how long, with frozen
 tears,
 She stood, it might be hours, she deemed
 it—*years*—
 Then—the cold, hollow eyes turned slowly
 round
 And looked at her—and still there came
 no sound—

And as in this dead horror she thus
 gazed,—
 Slowly that cold, white hand of his was
 raised,
 Slowly, again, it fell down on his
 breast—
 As though some pang was troubling much
 his rest—

As though to ask for sympathy—relief—
 Some sign of pity for his bitter grief,
 As though his heart had broken with some
 blow
 That she, who loved him, surely well must
 know!—

Yet, as all paralysed she stood, no word
 The stagnant, strangely stagnant silence
 stirred—
 Could this be earth—or was it that dark
 hell
 Of which our priests such hideous legends
 tell?

Ah! must she stay for ever on that
 ground—
 For ever with the dead men piled around—
 In such uncounted heaps that seemed to
 lie,
 Spread as beneath a never-ending sky?—

Oh! could she only flee this fearful
 place!—
 If she could only turn aside that face!—

That so unnerved her with its glassy stare—
 That froze her like some *horrible* despair—

If but some words of love she could have
 said!
 Alas! her lips are fixed—her soul seems
 dead—
 She longed to speak, yet knew no words—
 to pray
 That this wild vision now might pass
 away—

Then—still as lost—for ever lost, she heard
 The first, faint song of some awakening
 bird—
 And morning light stole softly to the sky—
 As from her lips broke one wild piercing
 cry.*

MAN—BORN OF EARTH!

THE autumn mists have laden the blue
 skies,
 The light no longer shines in his sad eyes,
 Change, desolation—death is in the air,
 And life no longer meets him strong and
 fair—

Man—born of earth!

His hours of early hope and faith have
 passed—
 His first bright flowers are withered by the
 blast—
 The early blossoms he had thought so
 sweet
 Are long since buried, low beneath his
 feet—

Man—born of earth!

Dreams, glowing dreams of youth, are his
 no more,
 Each joins the rank of those that went
 before,
 The peach is over-ripe—the filberts fall—
 A little scentless dust—and that is all!—

Man—born of earth!

Once more he goes back to his lighter
 days—
 Once more assumes to tread familiar
 ways—

* This vivid dream may have had its origin in our having remained musing, for some time during the preceding day, upon an ancient battlefield, and trying to recall and realize the history that belonged to it.—*April*, 1884.

Once more would he awaken in his breast
The joys the heart of his green youth
possessed—

Man—born of earth!

Dust—dust and ashes—see! his very
tread

Is only on the withered or the dead!
Deep down they lie—under that very sod
On which his earlier steps so lightly trod—

Man—born of earth!

DEPART FOR EVER!

DEPART—for ever!

Let not that shadow cross my path again—
That memory that is now a dream of
pain—

Of pain almost beyond man's strength to
bear—

The very outcome of this life's despair—

DEPART—for ever!

Come thou not near me in these calmer
hours,

Touch not, with thy hot hand, Life's later
flowers,

The flowers that blossom, now, are fair
and sweet,

They shall not know again thy burning
heat!

DEPART—for ever!

Ah! bring thou back to me, on earth, no
more

The evil shape that ruled my life before—
My soul hath yet not perfect strength to
fight

With the foul memories of that darkest
night.

DEPART—for ever!

Go! rest forgotten! or, at least, but seem
The cruel phantom of some hideous
dream—

For, as thy gloomy shadow falls, even
there

Falls, also, the fierce chill of my despair!

DEPART—for ever!

Come thou no more on earth; thy smile
may tell

Of Heaven, and yet be filled with fire from
Hell!—

Ah! look not on me with that gaze—with
eyes

In whose sweet depth a very madness
lies!—

DEPART for ever!

Despair lines with thine image—therefore I
Would blot it out from memory's lurid
sky—

And bury it in depths that shall retain
No further echo of life's saddest strain!

WAITING—FOR EVER WAITING.

NIGHT in the Pine-woods! when all things
are sleeping

In the deep softness of a June moonlight!
There is a tender hush o'er all things

creeping,
That never comes till these calm hours of
night!

Yes! as a spell—a strange, mysterious
thrall,

That breathes its own pure loveliness o'er
all,

Speaks to the heart with each subduing
sigh,

Each sound that in the night-wind mur-
murs by—

So speaks it in the passing, fitful swell,
The dying echoes of some village bell,

That now and then steal on the listener's
ear,

With changes exquisitely sweet and clear.

Dark pine-trees bend submissive to the
charm—

Silent, as spell-bound seems each mighty
arm—

The shroud-like mists, that rise and slowly
pass,

Leave their white tears upon the woodland
grass—

And Edna listened—with a broken sigh,
To autumn's melancholy winds that swept

The thin mist-clouds across the darkening
sky—

Then turned away her weary face and
wept!

For though the moon that lit those gloomy
bowers,
And shone through the still branches, was
but dim,
It brought back memories of far sweeter
hours
When she had watched that summer moon
with *him*!

"Ah, love! would that thou wert one
moment here,
Would I could meet that dark and loving
eye,
And feel thou might'st forgive each bitter
tear—
And feel thou might'st forget each weary
sigh—

"Oh! would thou could'st but read each
wish, each thought,
Each sweet ambition by thy memory
brought,
That thou might'st know how deeply must
entwine
All hopes of this sad heart and soul with
thine—

"But *thou* may'st dwell where the deep,
busy hum
Of myriads of vexed, troubled thoughts
may come,
Full of the mixed ambitions of a town,
That all sweet music of the past may
drown—

"Thou may'st be far from where sad forest
trees
Are murmuring to the autumn's fretting
breeze,
Where nothing harsher than a watchdog's
bark
Sounds through the evening sky—so still
and dark—

"Oh! for some fairy-power!—that I might
know
Thou, too, art where the soft winds
whisper low—
That yet the hour shall come, soon, or
more late,
When we shall meet—nor more shall
separate—

"Ah! sometimes, I confess—in this sad
day
Of silent watching—of suspense—of pain—

I even fear thou may'st have turned
away
From the loved past, and that—I watch
in vain!"

So went the moon down—slowly—on the
lea—
The night-jar, only, answered from the
tree—
Only the pine-trees by the winds were
stirred,
Only the distant hoot of owl was heard.

FOR EVER PARTED!

FOR ever parted! Aye—far better so,—
Thou would'st but bring back to life's
calmer scene
The haunting memory of a heavy
woe,—
The thought of what was—of what might
have been!

That past would I now bury—"fathoms
deep!"
So never more it cometh to the light—
Despair is now quiescent—*let her sleep*—
Even to the coming of the final night!

Forgotten? Would thou wert, and all that
part,
That hateful part that is with thee allied!
There are some memories that shall crush
the heart,
When all that with them lived hath long
since died!

Not in this life shall I escape thee—not
While I the breath of life shall draw,
shalt thou
Be altogether freed from my dark lot—
An evil cross is branded on my brow!

Prayer helpeth little—tears, alas! are
vain—
Patience! the end must come—the link
must sever
Only—*take heed thou comest not again*
Into that path thou hast made dark for
ever!

RETRACE THY STEPS!

RETRACE thy steps?—it is not in thy power!

The day is nearing to the sunset hour—
Retrace thy steps—nay! but the way is wide—

Shadows now veil the plain and steep hill-side!—

Retrace thy steps? Alas! it is too late—
Thou shalt no more re-open that closed gate—

And if thou could'st, the home that thou would'st seek

Is now in ruins—desolate and bleak—

Retrace thy steps? Thou wilt but find the bloom,

The last—of autumn's flowers on summer's tomb—

The fallen fruits lie rotting in the grass—
O'er change and death returning steps must pass—

Retrace thy steps?—but thou wilt find no more

The hands that greeted thee in days of yore—

The voice is cold and altered—the full tone

Of trust—of friendship is for ever gone!

Retrace thy steps? — alas! to find thy tread

Is now amongst the sad graves of thy dead—

In all that thou, unheeding, left behind
Change, death—estrangement—thou shalt surely find.

No! — rather walk thou calmly on thy way—

Seek not the lost joys of an earlier day—
Past steps are swept from off life's changing plain—

He who would fain retrace them—*seeks in vain.*

THE WREATH OF SERPENTS.

AH, Jealousy! who in thy steps shall tread
Needs take the path that leadeth *into Hell!*

A wreath of serpents coils around his head—

Their stings beyond all lips shall ever tell!

He hears the sweeter sounds of earth no more—

Neither of man, of beast, nor singing-bird—

Nor even the lion's strong and healthy roar—

Only the cobra's deadly hiss is heard.

He walketh in the steps of pale Despair—
Or with her, saileth down a sullen stream!—

And even the hideous wars that fill the air

Awake him rarely from his heavy dream—

Or paceth he through realms of burning heat,

By thick and noxious vapours overcast—
The sand on which he treads shall sting his feet—

He dreads the future, and he loathes the past—

He feels a wolf is gnawing at his heart—
There is no wind of sweet and cooling grace—

He fain would fly, and yet cannot depart—

A something deadly chains him to the place—

So! Jealousy—who in thy steps shall tread
Needs take the path that leadeth *into Hell!*

A wreath of serpents coils around his head—

Their stings beyond all lips shall ever tell!

REPUDIATED!

Go! and for evermore!—

I could not look upon thy face again—
That brow I thought so fair, in days of yore,

Now brings but memories of darkest pain.

Go! and for evermore!

All things that once I thought so sweet and fair,

On which I set such silent, priceless store,
Now bring to me but frenzy, or—
despair!

Go! and for evermore!
The gracious vessel of my love and
trust
Hath drifted to a strange, unfriendly shore,
The glowing flowers that decked it now
are dust!

Go! and for evermore!
I would that even thy memory now might
fade,
Pass as the radiance from a pearl-lined
floor,
Die as a rose dies—in the poisoned
shade.

Go! and for evermore!
Thine eyes seem now but loathsome eyes
of greed—
Those links I thought but golden links
before,
Now make the wounds, that even till
death shall bleed!

Go! and for evermore!
Thy very gifts beneath my feet I cast,—
For even as serpents—coiling o'er and o'er,
They glitter in the years for ever past!

DREAMS!—DREAMS AND ECHOES.

Love had his day—
And now from yon fair home hath passed
away—
Scattering but withered roses on the path—
Leaving one moaning by an empty
hearth—

Ambition's crown
Hath loosened on his brow—hath fallen
down,
And lies beneath the blighted leaves and
dust—
Its gems are stolen, or are stained with
rust—

The earth is brown,
The fair, sweet rose upon its surface dies—
The glowing sun of our desires goes down,
And leaves but loathsome veils upon the
skies—

Upon unnumbered tombs
Love's eyes look through a very mist of
tears—
Upon unnumbered, withered, blighted
blooms—
Upon unnumbered dreams—of wasted
years—

O'er all the land
The shadows lie—the last fruits that
remain
Fall listlessly from our slow-gathering
hand—
Their taste far less of sweetness than of
pain—

Love had his day—
And now from yon fair home hath passed
away—
Scattering but withered roses on the
path—
Leaving one moaning by an empty hearth.

AGAIN—A DREAM ALONE—

A MIST!

YES! for thy happiness although I pray
The prayer comes not from Love, God
knoweth why!
Thou art no need of mine, in Life's stern
day,
A dream, alone—a mist—in Love's warm
sky.

In all that makes thee happy I rejoice,
I watch, with glad eyes, thy strong,
earnest ways—
And yet my heart beats not to hear thy
voice,
And yet my heart is stirred not by thy
praise.

I love thee not, and yet my tears would
flow
If thou wert prostrate with despair or
grief—
Yes! if thou wert in sorrow's grasp, I
know
That I should hasten, even, to thy
relief!—

I know not why, indeed, my heart is cold,
Nor hath the knowledge of Love's
tender beat—

It is a secret Life hath never told,
A dream, alone—but ah! a dream how
sweet!

No! Love shall never shine upon my way,
Nor o'er my head her glowing banners
wave—

For me her sky is colourless and grey,
The roses shall not even deck my
grave!

TO A DEMONIAIC SOUL.

DARE never to recall the past, for thou
Can'st but recall what he would blush
to hear—

He prayeth only for oblivion now—
That name is hateful that he once held
dear—

Deep as the waters of the deepest sea
He would that past were buried—*all*
that past

That hath been linked so bitterly with
thee—

Its memory lies as lead upon his heart!

His prayer is but to bury in the grave
All things that might recall the days
gone by—

Still more the thought of the vile joy they
gave

He fain would lose to all eternity!

Oh! to forget that once—once treasured
day!

Is he not cursed!—shall he not be un-
blest

For ever—for that past?—ah! might he
pray

To sleep in an unbroken, silent rest!

For nothing sweet shall now thy voice
recall,

Only the vision of a hideous death—
Truly, he thinks but of a funeral pall—
And of the evil dust that lies beneath!

AH ME!

“AH me! the fatal hour when first we
met!

Wherein my footsteps wandered into
night!

Oh! that I could for evermore forget
The memories that shall have so foul a
blight!

“Why did I quit the paths that led
above,
To follow in those steps that led to
night?

Why did I dream the eyes but shone with
love,

That even shone with Hell's most lurid
light?

“Must I bewail for ever that sad Past?—
Is it a bondage that I may not sever?
And shall its hateful shadows ever last,
And follow both in this world and—for
ever?

“Is *this* the penalty that I must pay
For one short time of madly pleasant
sin—

Nay! is it useless even that I pray
Some calm and rest, some peace, at
last to win?

“Yes! still I ask, through ever-weary
days,

That past may be forgotten—I believe
I yet may walk in purer, better ways—
That there is One that never shall
deceive—

“And He hath promised that He will
forgive

Whoso shall bitterly his crimes repent—
So that, in all the years that such may
live,

Some light, some help, from Heaven
shall yet be sent!”

A MODERN CIRCE.

(*Drawn from Life.*)

THEY say no one within her precincts
came

But that she caught him in her toils of
shame—

She even on his highest virtues traded—
She by her very neighbourhood degraded—

She was not beautiful—but had that
grace

That distances all beauty in the race—
She had most strangely large and brilliant
eyes,

Lit even by an audacity of lies—

They who succumbed, at first, beneath her
spell
Swore that—were she a very “tramp from
Hell,”
And that her kiss a paradise would cost,
It would be—still—a *paradise well lost!*

Not till her witcheries paled, could they
perceive
The devil's links that fastened her white
sleeve—
The devil's gems that sparkled on her
breast—
The devil's roving eyes that could not rest—

She treated all her slaves with grand dis-
dain—
She led them by a soul-degrading chain--
God knoweth, only, why such evil feet
Trample on hearts that once but nobly
beat—

In that fair breast is placed the coldest
heart—
In that smooth hand is held a poisoned
dart—
Behind the eyes whose glowing beams
entice,
There lies a very sheet of deadly ice—

It needs one with the wise Ulysses' wiles
To break the spell of her Circean smiles,
To stand free — yet not stainless — as
before—
The “pure and undefiled” — alas! no
more!

REVEALED.

I KNOW thee now!
Thou art not of my soul, nor of my heart—
I see the cruel hardness of thy brow,—
Far as the very poles are we apart!

I read thee well!—
Thou thing of folly, of unblushing shame—
Recalling the dark tales some love to tell,—
I hear, with very loathing, even thy name!

In mean disguise
Thou camest first to me, oh! thou poor
creature—
I looked upon thee then with gentle eyes,
And thought that love lit up thy every
feature—

Go! traitress, go!
I know thee!—know thee as thou art—at
last!
O! that I ever could have stooped so low,
That thou could'st make such shadows on
my past!

Go! and for ever!
Thy spell is broken, and thy triumph o'er—
Mine own hands all the past false ties
would sever,—
So severed they shall here unite no more!

BEFORE!—AFTER!—

HE saw the World lie conquered at his
feet—
He heard the Universe ring with his
name—
Voices of triumph every footfall greet,
Around his brow is bound the wreath of
Fame—

From shore to shore his deeds are echoed
back,
Heard in the regions of eternal snow—
Heard in Arabian and Assyrian track,
Breathed in the Southern realms of fiery
glow—

These were his dreams, and dreams for
ever lost!
Dreams that have simply faded into
space,—
Why have they faded—what wild anguish
cost—
None know—save him who ran the
wearied race.

Again—but flitting dreams—as dreams—no
more!
Let them return not to his saddened
brain—
Life's fitful fancies shall full soon be o'er,
As meteors brilliant and as meteors
vain.

He, who shall look back on Life's fevered
schemes,
Sees little, planned in early life, is
there—
Lost now in dazzling—now in lurid gleams,
Now veiled by the dark shadows of
despair.

A VOICE HEARD IN THE
DARKNESS.

THE CRY OF A SINNER.

"THOU hast deceived me!—would that I
could drive
Away all memory of thy hateful eyes!
O Sin! how many years must I yet strive
Ere I from thy abysses can arise?

"How many youthful passions were there
not
Thou did'st embitter with unholy strife!
How many dreary pages must I blot
From the sad records of my earlier life!

"What oceans of salt tears, what hopeless
sighs
Must I blot out from Memory's fatal
slate—
What records of the pain that never dies—
What frenzied love, what bitterness of
hate!

"Oh! would that I had died, ere I had
heard
The first, dark, burning whisper of thy
name!
Oh! would that I had died, ere thou had'st
stirred
The smouldering passions of my soul to
flame!—

"Is there no grave so deep wherein to
lie
Forgotten! where no false memorial
stone
Shall make the bright heavens mock when
I shall die—
My grief, my love, my sin, my hate un-
known?

"O Mercy! even thy gentle steps are
slow!
Thou hast been slow—in visiting my
brain—
Hast thou no pity, then, for human woe?
Ah! I have prayed to thee so long—in
vain.

"O Death! hast *thou* no pity even for
those
Who kneel, imploring thee, with bitter
tears,

For the dear boon of thy unmoved
repose!—
For the calm sleep of everlasting years?

"Those—only—who would welcome thee,
O Death!
Thy ghastly footsteps pass unheeding
by,—
We, who would gladly feel thy freezing
breath,
We, only—pray to thee and cannot die!"

WITH THE DEAD.

I STAND alone in this wild, solemn spot—
I pray aloud, and yet he hears me not!—
And I am calm and cold—I cannot rave!—
I see him lying—lying lifeless there—
My long-beloved, my beautiful, my brave,
Even pallid as thou art, I would I were—

Yet thou art paler than the palest rose
That in my far-off Northern garden
blows—
I clasp thy hand—the hand that now is
strange—
I did not dream—beloved, that *thou*
could'st change—
Yet I feel not the heat of thy warm heart—
And at the chill of thy firm lips I start—

I am not mad—once more I would I
were—
So not to feel this horrible despair—
Oh! my beloved—we were not made to
part!
These ties of ours no one, but God, can
sever—
Take my heart, love, to rest upon *thy*
heart,
So let me still be with thee—now and
ever—

For I am all alone in this wild spot—
I pray aloud, and yet he hears me not!—
And I am calm and cold—I cannot
rave—
I see him lying—cold and lifeless there—
My long-beloved—my beautiful—my
brave,
Even pallid as thou art I would I were!—

* * * * *

ANOTHER HIDEOUS DREAM.

(I STOOD BESIDE A CHASM.)

I STOOD beside a chasm, deep and wide—
I looked out wildly for the further side—
And there I saw a form—ah! how well
known!

Stretch out its hands, as if to clasp mine
own—

And in that chasm I saw mocking eyes—
Behind those long arms raised to drag
me in—

I heard no sound, nor any sort of cries,
Nor yet the fearful blasphemy of sin.

I felt no fear—although the calmness there
Was not the sweet beatitude of rest,
But the dread hush of horrible despair—
The ghastliness of life that was un-
blessed.

And nearer still they drew, and yet more
near—

I seemed to almost hear each coarse,
bleached bone

Against its fellow crash, and to mine ear
No sound more terrible could be, in
tone—

And each one wore, I saw, a sheet or
shroud,

Through which the very form it veiled
was pressed—

And *then* — “Oh! save me, love!” I
shrieked aloud,

“Oh! take me, hold me, dearest, to thy
breast!”—

Ah! *then*—those ghastly shapes of yellow
hue—

They crowded round me—pressing to the
shore—

And down into some foul abyss they drew
My struggling form—and I—*I knew no
more!*

DESPAIR.

DARK monarch of the broad, unbounded
lands,

Whose mandates know not mercy—have no
grace—

Whose paths are lost in everlasting sands,
Whose footsteps none shall trace—

Whose voice is cold and freezing to the
ear,

Whose breath is as a deadly, poisonous
breath—

Love fainteth when thine evil shape draws
near,—

Thy pathways lead to death!

Ah! come not near me, breathe not on
my brow,

Pass on!—this is a calm and peaceful spot!
Thine evil presence I felt not till now—

Depart! molest me not!

Go thou to realms of cold, unflowery
space,

Go! where the wars of tempests never
cease—

Go! where there is no life—no breath—no
trace

Of sunshine, nor of peace!

Thou ghastly phantom!—men have feared
thee more

Than all inflictions of remorseless pain—
Madness and sin thy presence march

before—

APPEAL TO THEE IS VAIN!

EYES OF DARKNESS, AND OTHER POEMS.

INTRODUCTION.—

THE SPIRIT OF EVIL.

THOU watchest in the shadows of the street,

Or in some gloomy corner, through the night—

Thy brow is brass — of iron are thy feet—

Thy robe hath never known the lily's white!—

Thou art a tiger, thirsting for men's blood—

A weasel, hiding near a rabbit's nest—

A fierce hyena, crouching in the wood,

A viper, coiling, unseen, near our breast!

Thou art a hornet, hidden in the rose,—

Thou art a worm—deep in the heart of peach—

A frost that falleth as the east wind blows,

A jagged rock beside a pebbled beach—

Thou art as backward-walking as the crab,

And many know thee and few dread thee not—

If *seeming* insignificant, can'st stab,

With certainty, the heart's most fevered spot—

Thy claws are well concealed within a glove—

Thou art unmoved by sighs, untouched by tears—

Men say that thou art stronger far than Love—

That thou art weighted with the earth's own years!

EYES OF DARKNESS.

EYES that but note the surface, hard and dry,

And dream not of the bulbs beneath its crust—

Eyes that but see the many buds that die,
Not those upspringing freshly from the dust—

Eyes that see not the daisy, for the grass—
The primrose that is hiding from the wind—

Eyes that but see the shadows as they pass,
Nor dream of the clear heaven that smiles behind—

Eyes that shall only count the wintry blights,—

The blossoms that are withering on our graves—

That look into the gloom of ocean nights,
Only to see the snow fall on the waves—

Eyes that view but the steady hands that keep

Their hold on hidden sorrows—day by day—

That nothing see how bitterly we weep,
When our fair hopes are blighting by the way—

Eyes that care not to note the withered cheek,

The vanishing of beauty, there before—

That see not even those *other* eyes, that speak

Of griefs the pale, sad lips detail no more!

So—in the Watches of the Night, such eyes

Behold that skies are cold or overcast—

Yet look not for the glimmer of sunrise—
And are in darkness shadowed—to the last!

BEWARE! BEWARE!

BEWARE! beware! her voice hath not
The tones of charity, of love—
Look for the leopard's evil spot,
And not for feathers of the dove!

Beware! beware! her eyes are bright—
Not with the feelings that might *seem*
To sparkle—'tis the flash of spite,
'Tis malice brightens thus that gleam!

Beware! beware! by day—by night—
Avoid the hypocrite's cold hand—
Her heart hath had the Devil's blight—
Her brow hath had the Devil's brand!

Beware! beware! on smiling faces
May sleep the blackness of deceit—
For often in the fairest places,
One sees the mark of cloven feet!

Beware! beware! she may again
Seek shelter in the passing storms—
But charity and love are vain,
Her heart no kindness ever warms!

THE SELF RIGHTEOUS.

THEY think themselves in all things good—
Believe themselves in all things wise—
The flaws by *others* understood
Are unperceived by *their* vain eyes!—

They plod along some "chosen" path,
Unheeding of another's pain—
They slander Honour's noble hearth,
Then mock at her, should she complain.

They speak the sharp, unfeeling word,—
The word that wrings the soul—nor care
What depth of sorrow may be stirred,
What dark remembrance—hard to bear—

Yet—afterwards—they "cannot think,"
Or thinking, but misunderstand,
Why one should turn away and shrink
From proffer of a faithless hand—

O! some—we know it hath been said—
Feel little for the bitter woe

That *kills* another—calm of head,
Untouched of soul, through life they go—

O! on the plains of earth may dwell
The hearts that are in all things cold,
And why—themselves could scarcely tell,
And why—may never here be told—

True!—they the deadliest blow may deal,
Nor comprehend its fatal weight,
And such no mercy ever feel,
Except—in some rare hours—*too late*—

What punishment shall these deserve
It is not well that we discuss,
Some purpose they, no doubt, must serve,
Although so unperceived by us—

None are, we learn, exempt from woe,
The genial sunlight but awhile
Looks down upon the world below,
Then leaves us teardrops for the smile!

'Tis wise to fret but little here—
The weak lament—not so the great—
The frown of pain—grief's bitter tear,
All pass away—from those that wait!

THE STEPS OF THE RECKLESS.

HIS path wound o'er a fatal waste—
He went at leisure, not in haste—
He little dreamt his footsteps led
To dwellings, only, of the dead—

He thought that he was *always* right—
His eyes, alone, the eyes of Light—
And yet he had not known, in need,
The balsam from the poisoned weed—

Full carelessly he strolled away,
From tracks that might have led to day,—
And they who followed also went,
By fog-blind field and steep descent—

Take heed, then, who thy guide shall be—
Choose not the first accosting thee—
Or watch, if marching by his side,
That he may prove a *faithful* guide—

For there be those that lead astray,
Who take a strangely tortuous way,
And that their sight—or mind—is weak
No better, stronger path they seek—

And thus unwittingly they fall—
 And thus complainingly they call
 For help, from even realms below,—
 Those realms the wise shall never know!

And he who might have helped before,
 Can hear the cries for help no more—
 The sounds of self reproach, or fear,
 Reach not his now unheeding ear!

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE.

O LIFE! thy mystery that none can read—
 That problem now, as in the days of
 old!

First holding one and then another creed,
 Man now is feeble in his faith—now
 bold!

The “theories” of Heaven and earth
 conflict!

Here we know not the future, nor can
 tell—

Through veils that still are dark—un-
 lifted—thick—

The Life to come—the Life of Heaven,
 or Hell.

Something “unstable” in the brain of
 man

Still shows that it is powerless to
 embrace

The myriad wonders of Creation’s plan,—
 The mysteries of Time, of Light, of
 Space—

Our earthly eyes are dazzled when they
 strain

To read that future that is still so
 veiled—

Bewilderment o’erwhelms the finite brain
 To know of heights that shall not here
 be scaled—

Beyond a certain line shall man *not* go,
 Either into the realms of hate, or love—

A little and no more, all he shall know
 Of higher worlds—of those that stretch
 above—

In some mysterious way, against his will,
 Man’s faith is sometimes stronger than
 a rock!—

As by an instinct it shall haunt him still—
 Although its voice he fain would drown,
 or mock—

Yet there are “periods” in that faith—
 oh, God!

And hours of fitting unbelief, and then
 Life we regard as sprung from Earth’s
 mere sod,

And Heaven the vision of fanatic men!

SHE COMETH NOT.

SHE cometh not—this shadow of cold
 Hate—

Into the lands of sweetness, air and
 light—

She cometh rarely through the unclosed
 gate,

But stealeth through some opening, out
 of sight!—

She doth not always dare thy locks to
 break—

Only—when deeds are covered by the
 gloom!

She stabs not in the hours when men
 awake—

She steals not, in the daylight, flowers
 that bloom—

She is not even boldly, plainly, armed—
 But carries, hidden, a sharp, poisoned
 dirk—

She would not have thee be alert—
 alarmed—

Lest it should interrupt and spoil her
 work—

She doth not urge her deeds of spite and
 wrong

So much in cloudless—in successful
 days,—

So much when thou art happy, well and
 strong,

And when thy feet march calmly on their
 ways—

But when the skies are neither clear, nor
 warm,

When hail beats rudely on the wood and
 plain—

Then see her steal out in the wind and
 storm—

Then see her stoop, to stab—and strip
 the slain!

TO ——— ;

RESPECTING ——— .

"FEW women were more slandered and abused,
What time the wave of sorrow lashed her shore—
It seemed she could not be more vilely used,
'Twas *quite* another thing when storms blew o'er";

Friend—take it as *we* take it!—as a sign
The world is still the world of ancient years—
One notes full many glimpses of sunshine—
As well as many hot, complaining tears.

To speak with scorn of deeds of bitter hate,
Is not to grumble at the whole of life!
One sees full many things of strong and great
On earth, and may not *only* speak of strife!

The evil things that one has seen, at times,
The mean revenges — vices coarse and poor—
The sadder, darker tales of human crimes,
The foul things often laid at virtue's door—

These things of bitterness—these things of grief,
The fiendish darkness sometimes that appals,
These make us never, friend, refuse belief
In the fair spots on which God's sunlight falls!

SLANDERERS.

ONE's slanderers are not pleasant folk, for they
Know but too shrewdly how to lie and cheat—
Take up and throw foul mud upon thy way,
Yet—afterwards—pretend their hands are sweet!

And they will sing aloud an evil song,
To drown a tender and most tuneful strain—
Their carols are so noisy, coarse, and strong,
Not lightly in men's ears they die away—

Their orchards *outwardly* look healthy, yet
The fruits that therein grow are sour of taste—
Such as one's lips not easily forget!
And *that* to their most acrid soil is traced!—

And if they handle thy more precious flowers
Henceforth these shall be withered, or defiled—
They are no longer fit for fragrant bowers,
But for some savage heath, or wind-blown wild.

Then shall the *fair* light even of thy skies
By dull, unwholesome mists be clouded o'er—
Ah!—turn them from thy land, if thou art wise—
And see their rude feet trample there no more!

A PHARISEE.

No noble generous feeling could one trace
Upon that common-featured, hardened face—
Those vulgar lips and full as vulgar eyes,
Suggested no slight aptitude for lies!

To such the whole world was a stream of low,
Degrading vice, and from whose source could flow
Only the evil waters that, at last,
Into the "lake of fire and brimstone" passed!

Who should be surely saved from the dark fate
That ever shall the "Worldly ones" await,
Were the few friends that worshipped at *that* door—
These would be saved—*were* saved for evermore!

Yes! those were "dearest friends"—from
whom you heard
Only the flatterer's fulsome, sickly word,
These were the saintly ones of earth, from
whom
Lay a far brighter world beyond the tomb!
All who looked on these with disavouring
gaze
Were the coarse sinners of our earthly
ways!
Vicious and feeble—ignorant—full of sin—
Impossible that Heaven *such* souls should
win!

FEEBLE LIVES.—I.

SADDENED are some beyond all human
speech,
To hear what lives do certain
"Christians" lead—
The lessons of poor vanity they teach
Make often the more noble spirit bleed!

Putting on robes of sanctity—and yet
Doth their religion seem as a "dead
letter"—
Above all souls whom we on earth have
met
Most mean—yet with the air of being—
better!

The world is sadly selfish—so they say—
Cares only for itself and its own
pleasure—
Alas! who are so selfish as are they,
Or their own comfort half so fondly
treasure!

Yes! living but for self—*their* welfare
being
The one great thought, both in earth's
peace and strife—
That world's poor faults but far too keenly
seeing,
While blind to all its stronger, nobler
life.

If selfishness, as one believes, shall kill
The Christian spirit, in this world's
affairs,
That selfishness their whole lives seems to
fill,—
They shrink as cowards from all others'
cares!

FEEBLE LIVES.—II.

THESE are of those who shirk all noble
wars
That some upon this earth need wage for
Right—
Who say there are—*insuperable* bars
To *their* engaging in a "worldly
fight!"

Knowing their feebleness, they deem it
wise
To speak against the conflicts of the
hour—
And to pretend that all these they despise,
Because they lie outside *their* nerve and
power!

Or,—one has often known it, to their
shame—
They *minimise* the labours of the strong,
Will even seek to injure, or defame;—
'Tis envy's subterfuge—an old-world
song!

They hold as sinners, those of whom they
know
Scarce more than of the Aztecs of
old times!
Speak as if they alone were pure as snow,
All others stained by divers sins and
crimes.

These "Christians" many know: — an
ancient class!
One of all times—all climates—and all
races—
And you shall find, as through the world
you pass,
No lack of them!—if not *quite* in all
places!

SINNERS IN SHADOW.

THEY did such wrong as might be *safely*
done!
Good faith have they most cunningly
betrayed—
Still—not by falsehood shall the race be
run,
Although hath truth so often been way-
laid!—

Falsehood hath followers—numerous as the
sands
Of seas—for ever stained with her own
shame—

Whom she rewardeth with her own vile
hands—
Though they may often, such reward
disclaim!—

She hath been known to build a very
wall,
To veil from light and joy full many
homes—
And when she knows her edifice must fall
To bear the stones to others' hearths she
comes!—

And we have heard that despicable
slaves
Of hers, go forth to seek earth's holiest
spot—
Some will sow poison even on our graves,
While others swear for them—*they did it
not!*—

Ye cannot bring them down upon their
knees—
Although their sins against thee have
been great—
There is no shame in any souls of these—
Nor any path in which their steps are
straight!

EATEN INTO THEIR SOULS!

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS into their souls had
eaten,
As maggots eat into an apple's core—
So that remained but little then to
sweeten
The *rind*—that yet was smiling, as
before!

Yet, though the cause thereof might not
appear,
Something of blight seemed on that
shining skin—
A look that caused an ugly thought of
fear,
As to what evil might lie deep within!

Yes! still was something to suggest decay—
The "whited sepulchres" of church-
yard skies—

The weeds that choke some fragrant forest
way—
The sores, concealed beneath a fair
disguise.

Self-righteousness is a mean root, that
grows
In certain minds, in certain souls alone—
A blight within the heart of fairest rose,
A weed that only poorest soils have
grown.

Oh! I would rather know a sinner!—one
So called by lips of *some remembered*—
than
The "righteous race" that certain foot-
steps run—
Assumed to be for heaven, yet raced for
man!

NOT THEIR CREED!

"I AM the least of these"—is not *their*
creed,
Nor *their* profession;—who shall be
compared
To them!—they who of pardon have no
need,—
Who the earth's sins and pleasures have
not shared!

Truly *are* they the least!—no mark they
make—
Either on vale, on mountain, or on
plain—
The very feeblest paths of life they take,
The fields they sow, they sow with
shrivelled grain—

The flowers they rear can bear no "winds
of east,"
Nor grow they on more fertile plots of
land—
What paths they make are, once more, of
the "least,"
Their steps will pass as though impressed
on sand.

The plants they raise are of inferior
growth,—
Untrimmed, ungraceful—running oft to
waste—
Their fruits are small and sour—the one,
or both—
And set "on edge" the teeth of those
that taste—

Yet all they have and all that is of theirs
 They deem in value needs surpass the
 rest!—
 Their own wares hold they to be finer
 wares
 Than anything the outside world pos-
 sessed!

THEY—SOMETIMES—.

THEY—sometimes—prate of love—but we,
who know,

Stand by in silent laughter—seeing they
 Have never felt her rich and generous glow,
 Her warm breath breathed upon their
 earthly way.

She is to them a dream, alone—and yet
 A dream how sadly faint, unreal and
 pale!

A dream that as a dream they would
 forget,
 If none recalled to them its wondrous tale.

Even as a dream too gloriously bright
 To ever reach those poor, weak eyes of
 theirs—

One thrilling with most exquisite delight,
 And with whose warmth no other warmth
 compares!

And if a dream, one *God* hath sent to
 earth!—

A flower to blossom in the hour of
 death—

A gem of priceless, of unreckoned worth—
 That holds eternity in its pure breath.

A glory some—unhappy—never feel—
 Though they may make at it a madman's
 clutch—

A form at which their senses would but
 reel,

A something they shall never know, nor
 touch.

BETWEEN US LIES A GULF—

To —.

“BETWEEN us lies a gulf by far too wide
 For human eye to even span, or
 measure—

Filled with the poor sins of unchristian
 pride,

Of wasted labour and of meaner
 pleasure.”

“It is the boasted ‘purity’ that makes
 So common, even so vulgarised, thy toil;
 No noble Christian such coarse pathway
 takes,
 He finds no gems in *that* ignoble soil!”

“Ye even sit as censors upon others,
 And pour the oil forth of unholy vials—
 Ye are the self-made judges of thy brothers,
 Thine eyes pretend to fathom even their
 trials” —

Yet on their own mean brows they seek to
 place

A crown that is but theirs, as they
 believe!—

The very last their heads shall ever grace,
 Or whose pure rays their eyes shall e'er
 perceive—

The very poorest wretch that, stumbling,
 crawls

Along a path of pitfalls and of snares,
 Meeting with insults—blows and grievous
 falls,

May find a surer gate to heaven than
 theirs!

UNIMPORTANT RACES.

THEY filled in life such *very* paltry places,
 Theirs was so insignificant a lot—

They ever ran such unimportant races,
 And if they lived, or died—the world
 cared not!

They made such light mark on the world's
 affairs,

They held in it such *very* “poor
 estate” —

They bore the burden of such trivial cares,
 And were in all things of such little
 weight—

They added not to earth's great labours
 done,—

Nor one new leaf gave to its crown of
 bays—

No brilliant race those steps of theirs could
 run,

They sweetened not its often unclean
 ways—

There was no need to stand by any grave
Of theirs, to lay a crown upon *their*
tomb!—

Their deeds were never of the strong
and brave,
Nor shone they out, as stars, amidst the
gloom—

Yet see them walk!—as far above the rest!
As though of loftier state—of greater
powers—

As though upon those mean brows was im-
pressed
The glory of a higher world than ours!

IF ONE SHOULD FIND.

(IN ANSWER TO A LETTER.)

If one should find a nest of *lively* snakes,
And note their trail upon the road, or
plain—

Say! is he not the “ace” of fools, who
takes

His reckless way across such spots again!

And if he hath by them been sharply
stung—

Almost to death—shall any ask this man,
As though his knowledge yet were green
and young,

To follow out the same foolhardy
plan?—

To stroll again, where still these snakes may
coil,

And think, because his steps once more
are strong,

He can his enemies now lightly foil—
And onward march, with a triumphant
song!

Then—if he doth, his eyes, in truth, are
blind!—

He knows few perils of the world's
careers—

He hath not learnt the lessons of mankind,
He is a fool, whatever are his years!

Far better he should pause—to think, to
pray—

Or he may find—alas! and find too late,
Though he may be unharmed in *open* day,
He shall not yet escape a darker fate!

ONCE MORE.

ONCE more—keep ye apart from us; we
pray

That ye, again, our life may never
cross—

Ye were but stumbling-blocks upon our
way,

Whose slightest counsel, followed, was
our loss.

We know you and your ways and thoughts
too well—

If one may judge by fruits of many
years—

Not unto such our “birthright” will we
sell,

Neither for smiles nor hypocritic tears!

That knowledge by no pleasant paths we
gained,—

But, through the heavy mists of bitter
days,

Our weary, our disgusted eyes we strained,
To see the errors of but feeble ways.

In all our views of duty we should clash,
Through all the days that dawn on
earthly skies—

The sweet rays of a stronger life that flash
Across our brain are *not* rays for thine
eyes—

Therefore—keep ye apart from us; we
pray

That ye again our life may never cross—

Ye were but stumbling-blocks upon our
way—

Whose slightest counsel, followed, was

—our loss!

REVELATIONS!

YES! they have shown, by all their words
and ways,

Our griefs, our joys to them were worse
than nought,—

To try to play at *Friendship* in *these* days,
Shows something quite of — idiotic
thought!

Not through repentance — see you! oh,
dear! *no*!

All they have done they would do o'er
again!

Did the same—*duty!* rest on them, you know,
They would once more inflict that *needed*
pain!

Therefore—*why* ask your pardon? Ah!—
no more!

I sicken of mean words and meaner
actions,
Of their false deeds I have a mighty store
Laid by, and weighing something more
than—*fractions!*

We, in our troubles, nothing were to them,
Save as vile shackles they would fain
cast off—

They were not those who sorrow's tide
would stem,
By acts or counsels—tender—gentle—
soft.

Men value help and light most in the
hour

Of darkness, *then* the cheery lamp is
prized!

But when the sun shines out with un-
checked power,

This farthing light is scarcely — *well*
advised!

'TIS NOT FROM HARDNESS.

'Tis not from hardness, neither from con-
ceit,

That we do laugh o'er these mean, vulgar
things—

And mock the angry insects, as they beat
The air in vain with their poor, feeble
wings.

No! but *some* scorn, at least, may be
allowed,

To see the place they fill, some little
while,

Forming a strangely dense, unwholesome
cloud,

Vexing the air with shrilly notes and
vile!—

These discontented souls, who only prate
Of the world's weakness and broad robes
of sin,

Who say the earth is full of notes of hate,
That Right may struggle, but shall never
win—

These cannot see the sunlight's lines of
gold—

Nor hear the welcome fall of summer
rain,—

They only shiver that the winds are cold,
And note what daisies blight upon the
plain.

Yet if they had but moss whereon to tread,
Their feet would only falter in strong
ways—

If only summer skies smile, overhead,
They shall bear ill the breath of wintry
days!

DEATH COMES INTO THEIR HOUSEHOLD.

DEATH comes into their household—chang-
ing not

The temper of their minds, nor of their
hearts,—

Theirs is a common, a "self-seeking" lot—
They only figure in life's smaller parts—

No sorrow goeth deeply, nor can reach
To any depth in shallow lives like
theirs—

Of lightest mark the lessons she can teach,
To deepen, or to lighten, their mean
cares—

Those cares seem ever of a paltry kind—
Full of life's minor vanities and man-
ners,

Nothing have they, of large—in soul or
mind,—

They fight beneath earth's meaner, paler
banners—

Knowing but little of the strong and great,
Yet o'er the works of others will they
sit,

With something of a feeble "air of state,"
To judge of greater powers and rank
and wit!—

They touch the rind—*beyond* them is the
core—

This, did they see, they would not
understand,—

They only hear the cannon's distant roar,
Yet think they fight the battles of the
land!

A STINGING TRUTH!

"There is a species of men to whom a state of order would become a sentence of obscurity."—BURKE.

ALSO—there are some—feminine—of earth,
Whose claim to notice is no claim of
worth,
Of noble work, or saintly deeds—but—they!
Have made some grievance echo through
the day!

One cannot help but hear them, for, alas!
Their lips "are adamant"—their throats
"of brass"—
They show not the fair colours of the Jay,
Although its *shriek* is heard upon their
way!

Should we the gnat observe, save for its
sting?
Is there not many a mean and vulgar thing,
That but through mischief shall achieve its
fame—
That to remembrance hath *no* other claim?

These would unnoticed rest, in some small
spot,
Oblivious—others—of that trivial lot—
Unnoticed build some *tower* they call their
own,
And run *their* race and still remain un-
known—

Only—they rush out with some loud com-
plaint
Of earthly grievance — thereby make a
feint
Of doing *something* in this world—destroy
Some portion of its calmness, peace, and
joy!

PEOPLE OF A CERTAIN SET!

Yes! there are people of a *certain set*,
Whom you would but *too* cheerfully for-
get!—
For they are always pushing to the front,
As *anxious* — even — to bear the battle's
brunt!

Yet utterly unfit, in truth, are they
For anything like strong, straightforward
fray—

Did they not flaunt their banners to the
sky,
Only *too* gladly would one pass them by!

But there are weak ones on this earth, who
know
But little of the meanness of a foe—
And through this ignorance he a power
will gain—
Unless you sweep him strongly from the
plain!

A long and even patient time we bear
With noxious insects of the summer air—
Then comes a time when each detested
thing
Vexatiously will settle, with a sting!

If you would not to mean things be a
prey,
*You needs must rise and drive these
gnats away!*—
One cannot *quite* escape such vulgar
strife,
So long as one dwells on the plains of
life.

AN INJURIOUS CRAZE.

THEIR love of writing letters—letters
long,
Cross-lined and furious—*often!* was a
craze,—
So many said!—a craze that seemed so
strong
That it caused half the trouble of their
days!

Their pens seemed to excite themselves in
action!
As men are stirred by their own voices'
ring—
For *Truth* they seemed to care—hardly a
fraction—
The how to *scold enough!*—that was the
thing!

Sense—grammar—charity—found here no
places—
Truth had to them been nothing but a
creed—
'Twas arrogance and anger ran these
races—
With vanity to whip them up to speed!

They were not gifted with the power of speech—

By steady argument at once were "floored"!

Yet showed quite an insanity to *teach*—

Possessing of vain thoughts an endless hoard!

And they forgot — a fool's words die away!

And one forgets their wildness and unfitness—

They may pass to oblivion in a day—

A *fool's words written*—shall against him witness!

GNATS ONLY!

A—— TO B——.

GNATS only seem to swarm in *your* cruel sky—

In ink of gall *your* pen, in writing dips—

Go you your ways! you cannot say that I Spoke the false words so common to your lips!

Go you your ways! let not your footsteps tread

Again upon my flowers, my fruits, my seeds—

For wheresoe'er you pass shall leaves lie dead,

And wheresoe'er you pause shall spring but weeds.

Go you your ways!—my lilies, fair and sweet,

Lifting to Heaven each brow of spotless white,

Droop at the very echo of thy feet,

Until their every bud and leaf shall blight.

Go you your ways! and if they lead to Hell

'Tis not my fault; ye have been warned before—

He who will listen to no curfew bell

Must learn, too late, the hours of toil are o'er.

Go you your ways!—'tis late to loiter now!—

To such as you are words of warning vain—

There is an evil mark upon that brow,

That never shall be fair and sweet again.

WAS IT WORTH WHILE?

To ——.

Was it worth while on such a chance to wait,

To promulgate thy *much* superior "creed!"

To call on peace with lips that burn with hate,

To make hearts—sore with thy injustice bleed?

Was it worth while—so loftily to preach!—

The sins and faults of *others*, loud proclaiming—

And while assuming Heaven's own laws to teach,

By every act of thine that teaching shaming!

Was it worth while, to prate of truth *through lies*!—

Still walk in evil, fearing to retreat—

To scoff at all the footpaths of the wise,
Because they were too strong for thy poor feet!

Was it worth while, to speak, with scornful frown,

Of all the strong work other souls have done—

And yet so sure be of *thy* coming crown,
And of the higher glory *thou* hast won!

Alas, No!—poor and feeble are thy ways,—

Time marches quickly, but *thy* steps are slow—

Yet thou wilt hardly change, in all thy days,

For all the *years* that thou may'st pass below!

THE SACK OF TARES.

THE worst of living that "veiled life" of theirs

Is, that they walk with weak, unseeing eyes—

They sow, instead of corn, a "sack of tares"—

And will *not* learn the lessons of the wise!

They think their mission here is—*just to teach*—

When it were wiser, far, did they but *learn*—

Their great ambition ever is to preach,
Yet scoff if others preach to them, in turn!

By some mysterious process they arrive
At the conclusion none are good as they!—

No better path, *they* think, could men contrive,
Than treading in their own unblemished way!

'Tis hard to know *why* they, and not the rest,

Hold, in their souls, of wisdom such a store!—

And *how* such keys of knowledge have possessed!—

That "open sesame" of Heaven's own door!

What cause should be for this is not *too plain*!—

The Pharisee we know of old accursed,—
The world, at *least*, must hold that they are vain,

With "Pious Vanity"—of all—the worst!

SNEAKING FOES!

(A COMPLAINT TO — FROM —.)

THESE cowards are, in *open* warfare,
slow,—

Behind your back they seek to deal the blow,—

And watch, with ingenuity most fell,
To see, in stabbing, if the blow "went well!"

I love — have always loved — fair, open fight,

But *not* these sneaking foes that stab by night!—

An honest weapon, *not* assassin's dirk,
With which some—as I know—have done their work!

For enemies of *this* sort I despise—
I look upon them with such loathing eyes,
I could but shrink back did they *dare*
to come

Within the peaceful sunlight of my home!

Yes! if in *honest* warfare I received
My wounds, not by an ambushade deceived,

I had forgiven every bitter blow—
Even though in falling, these had laid me low!

But to be meanly, *smilingly* betrayed—
But to be by "assassin-rule" waylaid—
Ah! 'tis enough—I sicken at the thought,
The memory, by what low snares I was caught!

SNAKELIKE NATURES!

If thou hast scorn, let it be open scorn!
Don't feed things, like thy chickens, with
good corn,

Ostensibly before the world's keen gaze,
Then *poison* them, in divers spiteful ways!

Don't warmly shake the hand, with
"Borgian" shake,

To pierce the fingers with a poisoned ring!

Don't act, in *any* way, the deadly snake,
That lies in torpor, ere its fatal spring!

Seek not the simple,—truthful,—to beguile
With many an oily word and pretty speech!

Don't try to veil, with a deceitful smile,
The bitter lesson that thou mean'st to teach!

These are, above all hateful things, the ways

Of some we have been forced on earth to meet,

Who *mincingly* walk through earth's summer days,

And *say* all things most sounding fair and sweet!

Their masks are oft so carefully adjusted,
 Before the world, it cheats its clever
 eyes!
 The loathsome crust, that hath so long
 encrusted
 Their nature, becomes proof against
 surprise!

Could'st thou but see these in the looking-
 glass,
 When they are by themselves—yes! *quite*
 alone—
 See them in all their "nakedness," —
 alas!
 Thou wilt not see *one* thou would'st like
 to own!

THEY ARE OF THOSE.

THEY are of those who, were you in a
 pit,
 Would throw down heavy stones upon
 your head,
 Regardless where, or how, you might be
 hit,
 Or even if their blows might strike you
 dead!—

They are of those who, if your path were
 bright,—
 If sunshine smiled upon your cheery way,
 Would gladly share with you the generous
 light,
 And only would depart with lowering
 day—

They are of those who, while your life is
 strong,
 Know nought of prudence or of cautious
 thrall,
 Pause not to hint that what you do is
 wrong—
 Will answer to your voice whene'er you
 call—

Yes—*trust them not!* lest, from the meanest
 pride,
 Lest, from the poorest feelings mankind
 knows,
 You shall not find them linger by your
 side
 In times of troubles—in dark days of
 woes—

No! trust them not—they are not of the
 kind
 To hold thee up beneath stern sorrow's
 load—
 Their eyes in such an hour are ever blind,
 Their steps will pass thee *on another*
road!

THEY *MUST* SPEAK!

THEY speak out of a vain and bitter
 soul,—
 The lips of meanness they can not con-
 trol,—
 Their taunts bring blushes to the honest
 cheek,—
 Their words may wring and hurt—but—
 they *must* speak!

Cruel griefs of recent hours they may
 awaken—
 But by no throe of conscience are they
 shaken—
 Sorrows of gloomy depths their words may
 reach—
 And touch as daggers touch—but—they
must speak!

Though not the time for a malicious
 word,—
 Though not the time when anger should
 be stirred—
 For no excuse for doing so they seek—
 Their only reason seems—that—they *must*
 speak!

That loving past, with anxious care pre-
 served,—
 That tender work that only thanks
 deserved—
 They breathe upon, with breath both sour
 and bleak,
 And full of poison seeds, for—they *must*
 speak.

When there is room for sweet and gentle
 praise—
 When are thy days but fair and gracious
 days,
 Their words of sympathy are strangely
 weak—
 But storms are times for counsel!—*Then*
 —THEY SPEAK!

E— TO H—.

FAR rather would I break with thee a
crust,
And drink with thee cold water from a
spring,
While thy sweet eyes are full of love and
trust,
Thy words, *as ever*, free from spiteful
sting,—

Than share, with *some I know*, the loveliest
bower,

The richest palace money ever bought,—
Than waste, with *some I know*, one single
hour,

Or even exchange with them *one* passing
thought!

For there are some who run this mortal
race,

Who *pose*, awhile, upon life's shifting
scene,

Whose actions I have known to be so
base,

Whose slanders I have known to be so
mean,—

Yes! there are those whom I have felt
so vile—

That I would rather—thrice a hundred
times,

*Receive a blow from them than meet a
smile,*

For friendship's words from them were
almost crimes!

For one may "smile" and "be a rogue,"
we know!

Keep poisoned drugs, though hidden
from men's sight—

And one may deal, with his left hand, a
blow,

While smilingly he offers thee his right!
And such have offered cups like sparkling

—*snow,*

The thirst of some unhappy wretch to
slake—

Yet rather from a beggar's hand, I *know*,
Would I a cup of clean, cold water take!

THE FAVOURITE MARK!

LOVE! Love! the true and strong—hath
ever been

The favourite mark for malice—envy—
spleen:

If Love dwells peacefully within thy gate,
It is to some a cause for *shocking hate!*

Why hast thou what they never shall pos-
sess!—

What they have felt not—what they shall
not see—

And why should Love—the beautiful—so
bless

Thy home, yet ne'er within *their*
dwelling be?

Why on *thy* lap should she her roses lay!—

Why smile out of the depths of thine
own eyes,

Yet scatter never roses on *their* way,
Nor breathe her warm breath on their
chilly skies?

Because they have not made for her a
home,

A calm and fragrant nest, of birds and
flowers—

Where she without dismay, or fear, may
come,

When weary of her own oft-baffled
powers!

She shall not come where spite and envy
brood,

Where noxious insects crawl upon her
path—

Kites haunt the green depths of one well-
known wood,

And serpents coil upon one well-known
hearth!

DARK AND WHITE SPIRITS!

It is too true—denial now were vain—

That in the past years they have sought
details

Of never love and joy—but those that
pain—

Dragging them rudely from their sacred
veils.

Yet Spite herself may—*sometimes*—find a
match!—

Truth's voice may—*sometimes*—thrill a
listening ear—

And knowledge and experience can catch,
Not feeble echoes, but those sweet and
clear.

Hate—love—are breaths, both, of eternal life—

Dark and white spirits they — and of whose birth

Man knoweth nothing—but he hears their strife—

Coeval with his life upon this earth.

To earth came Love, but followed soon by Hate—

Ah! pray to God the first shall prove the stronger!—

And—lastly—triumph,—though the hour be late—

So shall her victory endure the longer!

So peaceful and so bright a dream as this

Dazzles the eyes, like glimpses of a God!—

Yet still remains a dream, alone, of bliss,

So long as man is monarch of the sod!

NOT TO BE RECALLED.

YES! Gone—and gone for ever!—

Nought by recalling it shall any gain—

The binding links did their hands—only—sever—

All wish to re-unite them is *in vain*.

In life's oft twisted ways

Do many walk with love—but more with scorn—

And some to meet with blame—a few with praise—

Some with fair robes, the rest with garments torn!—

See'st thou those bleeding feet,

Cut by the sharp flints of the ill-made roads!—

The passing wanderer, whom the heartless greet

With jibes, as he may pass their cold abodes!—

Though he be burnt by fire,

Blistered of foot, and sick of heart or brain,

There are those who will call him fool or liar,

And mock at all his misery or pain.

If, in some after-hours

Of sunshine—these black souls should come, once more

To seek thee—touch thou not their offered flowers,—

Nor let them cross the threshold of thy door.

Thus—gone and gone for ever—

Nought by recalling it shall any gain—

The binding links did their hands—only—sever—

All *prayer* to re-unite them were in vain!

A WARNING TO —.

If thou a strong race in this life hast run—

If thou thy duty in thy days hast done—

Or served some, as a "beacon in the dark"—

Depend upon it—thou wilt be a mark—

Because thou standest in a keener light—

For all that can be done by hate and spite!

If thou art righteous in thy work, and brave—

If thou hast blamed the coward and the knave—

If thou art seated on a loftier throne,

Then wilt thou be a mark for Slander's stone!—

All things of thine viewed with malicious eyes,

Loaded with dirt and weighed to earth with lies.

Sins—and of these a very mighty store!—

Will then be piled up, close beside thy door—

And while they coarsely trample on thy flowers—

They shall sing loudly through thy quiet hours—

Startling thy unfledged pigeons on their nest,

And doing all things to disturb thy rest—

"It may be mighty disagreeable!—still

They help thy welfare—though against thy will!

Yes! all this is but for thy *good*—they say—

"And thou wilt surely bless them—some fine day!"

Alas! that time is long in coming — friend—

Before we reach it Life itself may end!

TWO VILE SISTERS.

THERE walk, through many fields of earth,
these twain,
Envy and Slander—sisters vile as vain!
Whenever thou can'st see into their eyes,
Avoid them — for they are the Devil's
Spies!

Truly the very throats of these are cursed
By a devouring and unholy thirst—
Truly is theirs a deadly, rank disease,
Invading many homes of peace and ease.

Be not by their mean, *slippery* words be-
guiled,—
Whatever cometh from them is defiled—
The sweetest peach, that they have
touched, will show
An evil mark upon its summer glow.

Behold them gather, with their unclean
hands,
Sweet herbs that grow not on their own
poor lands!
Truly *we* speak, who have too often seen
Where the vile sister-steps of these have
been.

They cannot *bear* that on another's head
Shall burn a light that not on *theirs* is
shed!
Their hearts are angered that *another's*
flowers,
Brightening the earth, thrive not within
their bowers—

So walk, through many fields of earth
these twain,
Envy and Slander—sisters vile as vain!
Whenever thou can'st see into their eyes,
Avoid them — for they are the Devil's
Spies!

WE SPEAK, WHO SUFFERED.

LET not the hypocrite come *near* thy
dwelling!—

We speak who suffered, and we warn
you all—
There is no falsehood too big for *her*
telling,
Her conscience is no more than a—
stone wall!

She cannot live without a meal of Lies—
At least served once, or twice, through
all her days!—
See you the hungry glitter in her eyes,
If any one should *blame*, instead of
praise!

The artful "leading on," the mean pre-
tence
Of doubt, of kindly, charitable hope!
The asking for particulars, and thence
Deftly—in silence—weaving a vile rope!

The eyes look often down to hide their
glitter,
The lips o'er yellow teeth with tightness
close—
That heart, that is so deadly cold and
bitter,
Warms only in delight o'er others' woes!

Ah me! these wolves in their sheep's
clothing creep
Into thy sacred spots in darker night—
Or, like the Vampire, suck thy blood in
sleep,
Then sneak away and hide themselves
from sight!—

YET—LIFE! I THANK THEE.

YET—Life! I thank thee for thy lessons—I
Was blind, to see no blight upon my
flowers—
No storms—though gathering in a far-off
sky—
No serpents coiling in my fairest bowers.

Truth shall be painful, though it comes
from God—
Yet ever requisite—and I regret—
If I regret at all,—no paths I trod,
Save wherein evil, vicious souls I met.

Now the fair planets shimmer unobscured,
As I go onwards to the final goal—
And by no treachery, by no guile allured,
O'er moonlit fields, through peaceful
lanes, I stroll.

I gather not the poisons in the hedges,
The nightshade or the nettles, as I pass!
I see the deep pools underneath the sedges,
The pitfalls underneath the bending
grass,

And I would rather so!—that not again
I walk into the marshes of the plain,
But through the meadow take my grateful
way,
Towards the sweet sunset of life's closing
day.

AH!—STILL ARE THOSE.

AH!—still are those—who, when the heavy
hand
Of grief, or guilt, lies darkly on the land,
Or when the ghastly form of death is seen
To blight with evil breath Spring's tender
green—

With eyes of tender love will yet discern
The living seeds beneath the fires that
burn—
The flowers that through the withered
strubble spring—
The rose that to the broken briar may
cling—

Whose ears shall listen to the kindly voice
That bids us look up!—even to rejoice!
That hears the mighty tempests rend the
skies—

Then sees the stars that at midnight arise—

Their hands of kindness—held out in the
dark,
Shall grasp not fingers, only—cold and
stark,
Of silent death, or of despair—but those
That are the faithful hands of friends, not
foes!

For skies are not all tempests, wrath and
wrong,—
And winds may freshness blow, if winds
are strong—
Fair buds have even sprung from bitter
seeds,
And glowing spring the winter's blight
succeeds!

LOVE—LOOKING EVER TO THE FAIR SUNRISE.

LOVE—looking ever to the fair sunrise,
Walks through the groves and yet mist-
laden vales;

The light of faith is in her steadfast eyes,
Her lips for ever breathe her own sweet
tales—

She gathers fragrant violets by her way,
And hides them tenderly within her
breast—

And, through all traces of their sad decay,
For ever are they treasured and
caressed

Love—looking out upon the ocean waves,
Lit often with the tempest's lurid rays,
Guards carefully her noble ship, that
braves

The heavy storms—and decks it with her
bays.

Love soothes, with ever-sympathetic hand,
The brow whereon lie heavy clouds of
grief—

*Loosens around the heart the tightened
band,*
And bringeth to the starving soul relief—

She hangs her scented garlands on the
tomb,
Where her fair children gathered are in
sleep—

The stars shine even through death's bitter
gloom,

And sparkle through the tears her
mourners weep!

A WORLD TO "SOME" UNKNOWN!

THAT world is one unknown to them,
where I

Wander at will, where sunset's glorious
sky

Shines down upon a wild and noble
shore,

Or forest depth but lovers' steps explore.

Here, mid a thousand blossoms, fair and
sweet,

One paces on, with slow and grateful
feet—

To watch the growth of flowers, whose
glowing dyes

Had paled and faded under "their" bleak
skies.

Here is no bitter briar, no evil thorn,
To wound the lamb the shepherd late hath
shorn—

Here are no vipers coiling in the grass—
No poisoned fields through which one fears
to pass—

Here blend not, with fair Nature's tender
sighs,

Harsh voices — hardened by their bitter
lies—

The screech-owl's plaint may come with
their dull night—

It shall disturb not *these* sweet realms of
light—

Here only are the things Heaven loves the
best—

The squirrel's haunt, the wood-dove's
peaceful rest—

If tempests come, from God the wind
arrives—

They are not storms that human spite
contrives!

ENVY.

ENVY! in truth thou art, as some declare,
A passion yet more "wasting" than
despair!

Alas! thou can'st, as many darkly know,
Burn with yet more than Love's consuming
glow!

Thy rank disease can no physician cure—
Thy heart is bitter, and thy breath im-
pure—

And in thy very touch there is a taint,
That leaves an evil mark upon a saint!

Happy and proud and satisfied art thou
With the fair rose-wreath that might deck
thy brow—

Happy—until another shall possess
A wreath exceeding thine in loveliness!

Then wilt thou haste to curse, with bitter
lips,

The wreath that thy *less* fair wreath shall
eclipse—

Nor wilt thou rest until thy searching eye
Some grub concealed within its leaves shall
spy!

Even as the eager huntsman tracks his
prey,

Thou art upon our path—by night—by
day—

Now seen abroad, now hiding in some hol-
low,

Thou, as a snake, wilt in our pathway
follow—

Envy! again thou art, as some declare,
A passion yet more "wasting" than
despair—

Alas! thou can'st, as many sadly know,
Burn with yet more than Love's consum-
ing glow.

UNBOUNDED SURPRISE !!

WORDS FROM —.

OWE them!! Dost thou, then, for one
moment dream

The priceless love I hold I owe to *them*?
Thou hast within thine eyes a mighty
"beam,"—

A tree, it might be, of unrivalled stem!

What owe we them, think you, at this late
day—

For benefits—of gratitude unspoken!
This!—had they followed out their own
sweet way,

All gems I prized as dearest had been
broken!

Once more! we owe them this—that we
had never

A path that seemed to promise joy and
light,

But they would seek to ruin it for ever,
By planting weeds that could but sprout
to blight!

Owe them! Yes! when I think of it,
again,

One owes them more than lips can ever
state—

Wrongs of the slandered—hours of bitter
pain,

Ills that no words can well exaggerate!

Owe them! Yes! owe them those unspar-
ing blows

Such as in bitter hours can malice give—

Black injuries which, as every Christian knows,
Cannot be whitened — *this* side of the grave!

ADVICE TO THE UNWARY.

LET not the hypocrite thy threshold cross,
Or it shall surely be thy bitter loss—
Let such beside thy hearthstone *never* rest,
Or they will surely stab thee in the breast!

Take not the tiger in—out of the cold—
Or he will steal the pet lamb of thy fold—
Let not the viper sink into thy path,
Or — see it meets thy just and fatal wrath!—

Truly there are those hateful in one's life,
Who pierce thy heart as with a poisoned knife;—

Yes!—stab and stab again, and yet, meanwhile,
Will wear a sanctified — nay, *shocking* smile!

Avaunt, O Satan!—*he* doth well to pray
Who meets the hypocrite upon his way,—
There are few who more precious gems may steal,
And for whom more disdain the honest feel.

Yes! I have met thee! — pray Heaven never more
Thine evil shadow falls within my door—
Or that upon my grave may fall those tears
Whose vile pretence hath troubled by-gone years.

AH! YES—.

AH yes!—there are many evil tricks
In the world that's bordered by the "Styx!"

And idle are the tears we weep,
And powerless are our hands, that keep
So anxious and so sad a hold
On the pleasures that are growing cold--

When the stranger that may *seem* your friend
Is the one on whom you most depend—

When the friend on whom you laid such store,
Is the help of flagging steps no more—
When the eyes you once thought *kindly* bright,
Now only appear to shine by spite—

When the lips once dropping *honeyed* things,
Now utter only the word that stings!—
When the love that once had "show" so great
Hath turned in an envious soul, to hate!—
When the hand you once so kindly pressed,
Hath aimed a blow at your bleeding breast—

'Tis a thing decreed — that our earthly home
Shall never a realm of bliss become—
That the dream of our youth shall pass away,
When the locks, once golden, shall be grey—
While the pleasures of earth shall turn to dust,—
For joy hath only an outer crust—

Ah! bitter the tears we often shed,
When the rose of our youth lies soiled, or dead—
But there is a sadder thing than this —
When a friend shall give you a "Judas-kiss"—
And a gleam of treachery you shall meet
In the eyes you *thought* both true and sweet!

When the happy faith of early times
Is dimmed by the later tales of crimes—
When a woman-friend is a "tiger-cat"—
And a seeming hero but a bat!
Whom a gleam of sunshine puts to shame,
And when is Charity but a name—

For oh! there are many evil tricks
In a world that's bordered by the "Styx"!—
And the hearth of an ever-cheerful light,
And the rose unvisited by blight,
And the home that is unstained by fear,—
Are visions, and only visions—here!

BEGONE!

BEGONE!

Why com'st thou here into our path of
light?

Even as a north wind, with its breath of
blight—

Begone!

Begone!

There is no sunshine where thy shadow
falls—

Thy presence seems to mildew even our
walls—

Begone!

Begone!

The very flowers thou gatherest are litter!
The springs thou drinkest from are hence-
forth bitter—

Begone!

Begone!

There is no music, when thy voice is
heard—

It stays at once the happy song of bird—
Begone!

Begone!

There is no clasp of friendship in thy
fingers—

Rather—the cruel touch of malice lingers—
Begone!

Begone!

For in thy life is never warmth—o'ercast
With clouds, and sighing with the winter's
blast!—

BEGONE!

ONCE MORE—ENOUGH!

ONCE more—enough! I sigh for peace!—
I know

Peace dwelleth never where such spirits
are,

As thou and thine—the wrongs of long
ago

Are scarcely worse than this ignoble
war.

True! *noble* conflict would I never shirk,
'Tis stirring as a watchdog's ringing
bark!

But this is spiteful and most loathsome
work—

These stabs that thou hast given in the
dark!

You in this way alone, elect to fight,
As you, in truth, have often fought
before—

Not openly, in clear, in fearless light—
Such war I but disdain, — now, — as of
yore.

The weapons that you use can ne'er be
mine—

You are to honour, as to courage lost,—
Between us is a broad and widening line—
And one that shall not by your steps
be crossed.

No! enter never through our peaceful gate,
Within thy soul I see no noble spark—
A path like yours is but a path to hate,
I love the light, but you, alas! the dark!

SO—GO THY WAYS!

So—go thy ways!—the tawdry diadem
Of self-laudation is thine only crown,—
Under thy foot lies Charity's sweet gem,
And on thy face there is a dreary frown.

Go, tread the flowerless pathway—seeing
not,

Because thine eyes are blinded by a
mote,

That even on *thy* path may be a blot—
That in *thy* sunlight evil dust may float—

Because thine eyes on others' *dross* are
fixed,

The tale of thine own needs is left un-
told—

Nor see'st thou, in thy peck of metal
mixed,

Full much of lead, with measure light
of gold!

So age is reached—yet shall not come,
with years,

The love that should walk sweetly in its
train—

Neither fair hopes, nor sympathising
tears,—

To thee sweet Charity shall plead in
vain.

Her teachings, one has seen, are some-
times new,
Even unto those who death's own home
may near—
With ever darkening veils before their
view,
The final outlook growing yet less
clear—

Age hath its feebleness—moments—with the
fog
Of vanity to blind its weakened eyes—
Self-righteousness!—that lieth as a log
Upon the soul, forbidding it to rise!

LITTLE LIVES—LITTLE RACES.

How pass some little lives away! each one
Concerned about some small and silly
labours!
In what wise they some puny race shall
run,
Surpassing in some few poor steps their
neighbours!

This last is oft their object, and employs
Full many of their uneventful hours,
Makes up the measure of their trivial joys,
And keeps, in fullest strain, their little
powers.

For such light duties fill one part of life—
They draw out all their details for their
friends—
While, pointing out some others' foolish
strife,
Makes for their steps—obscurer—rich
amends!

Of their own doings mightily they prate—
And of what noble actions theirs have
been—
In leaving life they loudly *slam the gate*,
Proclaiming that they seek a brighter
scene!

And some mean "hangers-on" of these,
will write,
As their poor souls go forth to unknown
lands,
How virtuous were their deeds, — their
hands how white,
How gifts of mercy only filled their
hands!

A MEAN MULTITUDE!

THE small of earth, if parted from the
great,
Would fill, o'er-fill, a broad and mighty
state!
In every town of life—in every street,
The ear is met by echoes of their feet.

With multitudes they fill earth's duller
places—
They are too weak to run the world's great
races—
Nor can they scale a mountain's lofty
height—
They shrink from standing out in keener
light—

Far rather would they dwell in such
retreat
That they the echoes catch of their own
feet!
And where their weak, vain voices may
not sound
Like small, coarse pebbles striking on the
ground!

Their "fussy" charities will ring more
loud
That they are lost in no large, suffering
crowd,—
Thus shall be heard and greatly magni-
fied,—
Falling in "vacuous" places spread aside!

Truly! the little of the earth are swarms!
And, but for action of earth's ruder
storms,
The great of earth ere long would elbow
out—
So leave the whole world theirs, to "gad
about"!

YES—VANITY.

Yes—Vanity! thou playest a strong part!
When once thy seeds are planted in the
soul—
Their growth will shadow both the mind
and heart,
Until all things fall under their control.

Thou art as evil as an Upas tree!
 Like poisonous and like deadly is thy
 shade—
 And all who in thy neighbourhood may be
 Will *by* thee but too surely be betrayed!

Rarely thy roots are deep on *noble* ground,
 Where earth's more healthy leaves and
 flowers shall grow—
 But on the meaner fields thy plants
 abound—
 'Tis there we see them sow and yet re-
 sow.

And once up-grown—with strength, there
 may be few
 Shall flee their evil influence—and none
 Escape *some* poisonous, unwholesome dew,
 Who rashly through thy heated realms
 may run—

All healthier life is checked by thy swift
 spread—
 Few are the districts that shall know
 thee not—
 Thou seekest even the dwellings of the
 dead;—
 Thy blossoms waft to earth's most sacred
 spot!

SAD—AND SADDER.

SAD lives are those, on whom the heavy
 hand
 Of sickness, with its "hope deferred"
 is laid—
 Who looking backwards o'er this earthly
 land,
 See but the ashes of their loved and
 dead.

Sad hearts are those who see their dear
 ones fade
 And pass away, before their weeping
 eyes,—
 Their hours go by in silence, or in shade,
 With glimpses only, of the fairer skies—

Ah! yet there may be even sadder lives,
 Who nothing know of loftier human
 powers,
 And who shall fall in battle—who
 survives,
 Is little to disturb their torpid hours—

Their thoughts are of *themselves*, and which
 shall be
 The foremost in some paltry race *they*
 run—
 What *they*, alone, shall suffer, win—or see,
 Until the labours of their course are
 done!

And unto them, they boast, that course *is*
sure,
 The light, the joy of an eternal day!—
 To them the prize seems certain—*quite*
 secure.
 So march the poor fools blindly on their
 way!

MANY MEN—MANY MINDS!

So—Life! men rush along thy many
 roads—
 Some in the showy vehicles all know—
 That one may watch them to their proud
 abodes,—
 And see the sun shine thereon, with
 warm glow!—

Some draw their many blinds down!
 shrinking back,
 Lest any trace a meanness on their fea-
 tures—
 Lest any note too narrowly their track—
 For these are of earth's meaner, poorer
 creatures.

To soothe their "self-esteem" they dare
 to vow
 It is from "principle" they dwell in
 corners!
They fear not—they! the light upon their
 brow,
They "dread no warfare," and they
 fear no scorners!

'Tis easy to send forth upon the wind
 The feeble cry that reacheth no man's
 ear!—
 'Tis easy to prate of a stronger mind,
 The while the very north wind's sigh to
 fear!—

'Tis easy—doing *nothing*, to assume
 That doing *nothing* is a noble thing!
 Yet—somewhat odd—to sport the midge's
plume,
 And fancy that it is the beetle's wing!

A QUESTION.

"WHERE are thy weakly, *blinded* foot-steps straying?"

To one, a straggler on the roads, we said—

"Why go where only wintry winds are playing,
And dead-year leaves fall on thy frosted head?"

"Why dost thou pace the brown, bleak bogland only,
And where the rude briars tear thy careless hands—
Taking the paths that everywhere are lonely,
And not the paths of fairer, sweeter lands?"

"Dost thou, then, look for grapes where grows the thorn—
Or only note the grub that spoils the rose?
Dost thou but spy the blight upon the corn,
See only fields where seeding poppy grows?"

"Dost thou the wailing tempest only note,
The forest trees, with stripped, or broken boughs,—
Only the mists that o'er the mountains float,
And not the light that gilds the alpine brows?"

"Only the vessels that go down at sea,
Not when, upon the waves, they lie at rest?
Only the blighted fruit upon the tree,
Not the warm shelter for the blackbird's nest?"

WHAT FOLLOWED!

BUT angrily the traveller turned aside,
As though our words were foolish or unkind,
I know not if from shame, or only pride,
Or if her eyes were weakly, sore, or blind!

"I thank thee not," in angry tones she cried,

"For pointing out the pitfalls by my way—

But if from fairer paths I turn aside,
What is my folly unto thee—I pray!"

"Nothing"—I answered; "if you will not teach

That yours is but the wiser path to tread—

Preach your example unto all and each
You meet;—*save this, 'tis nothing, I have said.*

"A life may be a mean life, yet a rock
By which a fair career may have been checked—

For it is something in a tempest's shock,
If *one* light, careless vessel hath been wrecked.

"And still a vessel that goes down at sea,
One, simply looking on, may have distressed,—

Only the blighted branches of the tree
Grieve him who loves the singing thrush's nest."

Yet looking towards the setting of the sun,
I saw those steps still on the same dull way—

I know not when her weary walk was done,—

I—still went on, towards the closing day.

WELL BE-KNOWN!

THERE'S a class of "Christians" who disdain to pray—

For you see "they never sin"—so why *should* they!

Oh! we know them well—'tis a race that many know—

For they came into the world *so long ago!*
They are not, indeed, of a sort to pass away,
But one that remaineth green when the world is grey!

There's a class of "Christians" who disdain to pray—

For you see "they never sin"—so why *should* they!

If they seem to change 'tis never a change
 of *mind*,
 For they still remain to their own faults
 just as blind—
 And they preach to all who may chance to
 cross their path,
 That godliness only, sits beside *their*
 hearth!

There's a class of "Christians" who
 disdain to pray—
 For you see "*they never sin*"—so why
should they!

Of the vainest fancies, of conceited brains,
 Whose untried powers *chance* easily o'er-
 strains—
 Of a kind that hath no "stay" for a long
 race,
 And that needs a strong north-wind their
 nerves to brace!

There's a class of "Christians" who
 disdain to pray—
 For you see "*they never sin*"—so why
should they!

And nothing is left them, therefore, on
 this earth—
 Would they not be a subject but for pity-
 ing mirth,—
 But to hold back from the jeering light of
 day,
 And boast that they walk in a purer, holier
 way!

BLIND AS A BAT TO THEIR IMPERFECTIONS.

BLIND to their imperfections as a bat!
 Wrapt up in little thoughts of little
 cares,
 They had to "save themselves,"—alone;—
 for that
 Was the *one* thought through all that life
 of theirs!

Yes! even *that!*—to "save oneself—
 alone—"
 Each heart encrusting like an evil cake—
 A wider thought to them was quite un-
 known
 Of *risking* something for another's
 sake!

That is—unless it served *themselves*—you
 know—
 And helped them on the race they meant
 to run—
 For *this* help they at no time seemed too
 slow—
 While boasting of the good things *they*
 had done!

No heroes e'er were made of such poor
 stuff!
 Enfeebled in their strength—failing in
 powers—
 Self—self was the idea that "*led!*"—
 enough,
 In truth, to fill the measure of their
 hours!

Oh! for a fairer stamp of life than this—
 The meanest, lowest, most ignoble type,
 Spent to secure its own—not other's bliss—
 A spirit that for *Heaven* seems *scarcely*
 ripe!

AH! LET ME WARN THEE!

To—.

AH! let me warn thee! thine is but a
 waste
 Of earthly time that might be better
 used—
 Thy words of seeming kindness are mis-
 placed,
 Thou hast all right to Friendship's hand
 abused!

Go thou thy road—seek not on mine to
 stray—
Thy right is forfeited—thou knowest
 well—
 'Tis *too late* to commence a newer day,
 The Past's black, evil shadows to dispel.

Take thine own path;—let me but this
 advise thee,
 To follow it with a more humble tread,
 That, in the future, those that now despise
 thee,
At last, may pity feel for thee instead!

Had'st thou but walked a sweeter way
before,
 Thou had'st not met a late but strong
 rebuff—

But never shalt thou a past faith restore—
Long years of trial *surely* are enough!

Life is, at last, but short! short to retrace
Thy steps, ere yet its atmosphere is
grey—
And those of thine that have been thy
disgrace,
Will leave their mark for ever on thy
way.

GOOD COUNSEL!

(FROM A FRIEND.)

'TWERE well to give not even *one* passing
thought
To any bitter soul amongst all these—
Thou hast by sweeter voices long been
taught,
The voices of the birds, the flowers—the
trees!

These evil ones shall cloud not *thy* broad
sky,
Nor hush the lapping waters of *thy*
tide—
Change to thine ears the peewit's evening
cry,
Narrow that horizon—to thee so wide.

Can they detach from thee *one* honest
friend,
Or change *one* kindly, trusting heart,
whose beat,
Shall even be faithful to the very end,—
Or make Love's tender voice less fond
and sweet?

Are they not even weak as they are vain?
To thee are they as plants of common
soil—
Through *thy* calm life runs many a golden
vein—
Beyond the reach of their poor powers
of toil!

For they can never touch those deeper
gifts
From God, by spying of vexed, envious
eyes—
Nor shadow one of those bright thoughts,
that lifts
Thy soul from earth unto the loftier
skies.

DISAPPOINTING LIVES.

WHAT is the voice of thunder as it rolls,
And so much terror from a weakling
wins,
To the dark conflicts of *some* human souls,
To the foul ruins wrought by human
sins?

What is the murkiness of winter's night—
The howling of sharp winds across the
plain,
To the fierce voices of malignant spite—
To souls to whom pleads Charity in vain?

What is the ravage of the wolf, or bear—
The hopeless bleat of the deluded
sheep—
The raven's evil croak upon the air,
Compared to sounds of human souls that
weep—

What are the withered branches of the
wood—
The drying-up of healthy mountain
streams,
Compared to hearts in which dwell little,—
good,—
Whose lives are almost as unwholesome
dreams!

Alas! much withered harvest hath dis-
graced
Plains o'er which seems to sweep a
wholesome wind—
And there is much of evil growth, or waste,
In many a *seeming* kindly human mind!

WITHOUT CONSCIENCES.

A LETTER FROM — To —.

WHAT lies they told—these people! what
mad lies,
Concerning me and all my joys and
cares—
As though they saw, with supernatural
eyes,
Into *all* matters linked with *my* affairs!

What lies they told—these people! about
all
My life—they seemed with these their
hours to fill!

One might a jealous *madness* almost, call
The craze they showed to speak of me
some ill!

What lies they told—these people! with
such zest,
And with, you saw, such strangely evil
spite;
The darker and the fouller seemed the
best!
As stranding *others* in Earth's darker
night!

What lies they told—these people! they
who came
So rarely near those sorrows of our
dwelling—
Without one single sentiment of shame—
And of fierce jealousy and hatred telling.

What lies they told—these people! I
declare
I think upon it often with amaze—
I think, if I *might* swear, friend, I would
swear
Their lies the biggest that e'er crossed
my ways!

MRS. — TO MRS. —.

LETTER I.

FRIEND! would you know what *lies* are
made of—I
Can tell you in the case of *certain*
folks!—
That is of certain relatives, who lie
As if their pretty tales were merely
jokes!

I don't mean *all*—you know! exceptions
prove
The rule—as all but idiots must know!—
And I can tell of relatives—whose love
Survived spite's even most malignant
blow!

But take some of a *certain* class—who wear
A seeming smiling face—and who pre-
tend
To friendship—and such oaths about it
swear
They might have made a saint's hair
stand on end!

They live about a hundred miles away
From certain folks who bear a certain
name—

Yet what a very *sack* of lies do they
Contrive to spread about them—all the
same!

These lies they did not garner, but would
take
To scatter them abroad *no end* of
pains!—
The sack turn inside out, and fiercely
shake—
To *make the most* of all its poisoned
grains!

AN UNPLEASANT BLIGHT!

THEY are remembered, in life's distant
scene,
As but a mist—as an unpleasant blight,
Beneath which nothing grew of fair and
green,
Upon which shone no strong, no honest
light—

Their sky was ever same and overcast,
Beneath which roses rarely seemed to
blow,
Swept by a spiteful and uneven blast,
Cold even in summer, as with chill of
snow.

If any think to plant some tender flower
Near some gay, tawdry corner of *their*
beds,
He surely afterwards shall rue that hour
In seeing withered leaves and drooping
heads!

They hated every bud that seemed more
sweet
Than those that might be raised by their
poor hands,—
They roughly sought to trample under feet,
What made more fair than theirs,
another's lands—

Go ye not *near* such—ye who are pos-
sessed
Of any thing of value and of worth—
Or thou wilt know regret, in thy sore
breast,
In every hour passed afterwards on
earth!

MRS. — TO MRS. —.

LETTER II.

YET think not, though I know some bitter
hearts—

Have met with those who played unworthy
parts—

For even a second I have changed my
creed,

My faith in God's belovèd—no—indeed!

Nay! it is even stronger for the past;

I do not—that the skies are overcast—

Forget what gracious light shone often
down

Upon my path — what skies without a
frown!

The *good* but fairer show beside the vile—
The frown of hate shall never hide the
smile

Of love—the chant of Pilgrims—sweet,
yet strong,

Is heard above the sinners' ribald song.

The voices of some noble souls have
passed—

One heard their pure notes ringing to the
last—

And yet to earth—again and yet again,

Come back the echoes of some tender
strain.

Faith, that is worthy, still shall conquer
death—

Mine leaves me only with Life's parting
breath!—

Nor will I, when the clouds obscure the
scene,

Forget the days of glory that—*have been!*

A NOBLE PETITION.

"Forgive them—for they know not what they do."

ONE of the noblest prayers our lips can
frame!—

Yet hard to pray beneath some bitter
skies—

These lies that have so covered them with
shame!—

Can we believe they know not they were
lies?

Some are born "colour blind," 'tis very
true—

And when with seeming impudence they
swear

Thy cherished plants of white are blighted
blue,

It *may* be in their eyes such blight *is*
there!

Yes—truly! many of this earth are blind—

The skies of life seem ever dull and
grey—

Turn them into a forest track!—they find

Only coarse weeds and flint stones by
the way!

'Tis certain many have no cultured taste,

For all the richer fruits God placed
below—

To give them peach or nectarine were
waste!

Their lips these finer flavours shall not
know.

Give them but poorer viands—such as they

Themselves could relish—made from
poorer seeds!—

For richer food on them were thrown away,

Nature her treasures keeps for loftier
needs!

AMONGST, BUT NOT OF THEM.

As in a garden, choked by weeds, there
grows

One noble lily and one stately rose—

As in a forest of but common trees

One lifts a grand head to the wintry
breeze—

As in a fleet of smaller ships is one

That floats a brave flag to the stormy sun,

And, fearless of the billow and the breeze,

Pursues its proud way o'er Atlantic seas—

As in a herd of cattle one shall raise—

One only—a proud head—with steady gaze

Turning to his pursuers his brave breast—

Born with, and yet a stranger to the rest—

So shalt thou see a noble soul and heart

Dwelling with seeming kindred — yet
apart—

Wider—refined—in feelings—in ideas—
Leaving their narrow for *his* broad areas—

So shalt thou see, shine brightly and afar,
Amongst the smaller lights a cloudless
star,

Whose beams, unlike the rest, are strong
and clear,

A fairer planet from another sphere!

USELESS INTERFERENCES

WITH—NATURE!

I AM a ———! and not one of *them*!
The rose may blossom on a certain
stem,

But nothing can induce it e'er to blow
Upon those *raspberry* bushes—don't you
know!

And all "their" efforts for this end were
vain—

Whether it was a rose, or but a bramble,
Nature had made it for the hill, or plain—
And taught it where to *root*, or where to
ramble!

O! to what fruitless purposes some spend
Throughout their lives their fretting,
peevish hours—

Yet evermore arrive at the same end,
To see, confounded, all their hopes and
powers!

It was their efforts just to make the Pine
Grow like a Willow that the most "up-
set" them!

Vainly its branches did they seek to *twine*,
And loud their grumbling that it would
not *let* them!

It was their trying to make lilies turn
Into coarse marigolds next brought them
grief!

Alas! for them—they were full slow to
learn

That Nature guards her every bud and
leaf.

I am a ———! and not one of *them*!
The rose may blossom on a certain stem,
But nothing can induce it e'er to blow
Upon those *raspberry* bushes—don't you
know!

AN UNDESIRABLE KNOWLEDGE.

No! there is little that can shock us
more

Than the *black* ways in which some
"Christians" act!

Nor should we this have credited, before
Experience even *insisted* on the fact!

One hoped the human soul must needs
have some

Compunction—that at odd times might
be stirred—

Not "these" we speak of—conscience here
was *dumb*—

Or, it may be, her voice had ne'er been
heard!

The absolute invention—nothing less—

The monstrous fabrication — *fiendish*
spite—

No other world may serve!—the *selfish*-
ness—

The bold conversion into black — of
white!—

All these things have we seen—all these
things heard,

All these things known, alas! and known
too well—

The falsifying act and deed and word—

Lies one had hoped *too* black for lips to
tell—

One would have rather not been *quite* so
wise!

Nor have been forced to feel such rightful
scorn!

'Tis not a pleasant, or desired surprise,
When first such knowledge on the mind
shall dawn!

LETTER TO —.

Ah, no!—if through a course of bitter
years,

They found that we were all they most
despised,

They seek in vain to re-shape their
careers—

The time is past — they are but ill-
advised—

If one were used *once*, but for insult—
loaded
With fiendish lies, till one was almost
goaded
To bring to public punishment our foes,
These cannot more as friends be met,
God knows!

Let memory sleep—let even her echoes
cease—
Arouse her, she will surely bring again
What shall but wearily disturb our peace—
A myriad legends—both of wrong and
pain.

To let old fabrications be once more
Dragged back to light were but an act of
folly—
Nothing a ruined faith can now restore—
The leaves are blighted on *that* branch
of holly!

And so, “let sleeping dogs lie”—we are
told—
Nor waken one by a familiar name—
The fire upon a once warm hearth is cold,
And nothing shall rekindle now its
flame.

AN ENDLESS WAR.

THE Evil and the Good must ever war
Here, on broad plains beneath our
earthly skies—
Upon *yon* wood shines down the evening
star,—
On *that*, no star is ever seen to rise!—

Here are fair gardens, where the rose is
sweet—
Where stately lilies lift their noble
heads—
Where scented violets blossom round our
feet—
Or where one ever on the daisy treads—

Here ripen pears, and here the sunny
peach
Is glowing—here the red “love-apple”
smiles—
And here hang purple grapes—on all and
each
See you no black and spreading stain
defiles.—

Go you into another garden—there
Grows little—wholesome,—pleasant to
the taste—
Grows little that is healthy, strong and
fair—
Only the weeds conceal the barren
waste—

Thus—in this world—from one small house-
hold come
The sounds of concord — voices sweet
and clear—
But seek not yonder *seeming* peaceful
home—
Thence issue sounds to wound both
heart and ear!

THE MARCH OF THE WORLD.

(Contributed by a Doubting Soul!)

MOVE on! move on! The cry means little
more
Than “spirit-cravings”—both by night
and day—
Move on! move on!—join those that march
before—
Or take the paths that lead an unknown
way!

Moved on thou hast!—but art thou then
the better,
O World! than thou hast known thyself
before?
Doth not past glory seem as a—“dead
letter”?
Hast thou of wisdom a much greater
store?

Look back to History!—hath that history
much
Of gloom beyond what *now* thy records
tell?
Ah! put thy “tender conscience” to the
“touch”—
See if thy doings, *now*, are always well!

There *may* be progress in the finer arts—
(Though even this *some* doubt!)—in
in modern times—
But is there progress in Life’s *nobler*
parts—
Do we know less of poverty—of crimes?

The banner of her vices may be furled—
 Yet underneath may gleam a lurid light—
 And sometimes one doubts much if this
 great world
 Is marching on to Heaven, or into--
 NIGHT!

O WORLD! MAD WORLD!

O WORLD! mad world! look o'er thy vast
 estate!

Where is thy path to Life's Eternal gate?
 Think of thy past, oh! reckless world, and
 pause—
 Ere thou dost mock at Heaven's unyielding
 laws.

Bestir thee, thou brave world—for thou
 at times
 Art brave, and full of strength and
 passing zeal—
 Wipe out past records of mistakes or
 crimes—
 The sorrows of the penitential feel!

Up and be doing—let reform be strong—
 What though thy early skies be overcast,
 Yet may thy Future, oh! thou World, be
 long:
 Up and be doing, and retrieve the past!

Some say thou, in these latter days, art
 mad!
 Thy soul but reckless, if thy heart is
 brave—
 That rest upon thy plains is never had,
 Save in the very silence of the grave!

'Tis true thou art a rock, whose paths are
 steep—
 Whose snows are blinding and whose
 tempests howl—
 Even round the guarded pastures of thy
 sheep,
 The crafty fox, the savage wolf will
 prow!

Thou may'st well pray, at least, for peace
 and rest—
 For thou art old—thy features grim and
 grey—
 But slumber in thy precincts is unblest,
 Save, only — earned by labours of the
 day!

O World! tired World! thou yet must work
 awhile,
 Centuries of labour even await thee now,
 Ere thou can'st rest in Heaven's eternal
 smile
 Calm in thy heart, and Peace upon thy
 brow!

CITY CHILDREN;

OR,

TWO VIEWS OF THE SUBJECT!

AH! little children—with the pale, dull
 faces,
 No one can watch your steps without a
 sigh—
 Picking your way through these unfragrant
 places,
 And looking upwards for a glimpse of
 sky!—

So preternaturally wise each feature,
 So strange each accent and so sharp
 each tone—
 Each one a little, wizen, untaught
 creature,
 Whose care is for its own small wants
 alone—

I would that ye were out upon the hills,
 Or where the larks or low-voiced black-
 birds sing—
 Where roses cluster by their own sweet
 wills,
 Where humming beetles pass thee on
 the wing—

I would that ye were wandering o'er the
 sands,
 Treading the sea-banks with small, eager
 feet—
 Filling with tiny shells those brown, rough
 hands,
 Breathing the air that is both fresh and
 sweet.

Ah! yet not only under city skies—
 Ah! yet not only in these city walls
 The tiny flower upsprings—upsprings and
 dies—
 As Death affrights us with his sudden
 calls.

For Death is oft impatient and will clutch
 With fierce, rude hand the offspring of
 the rich—
 While they who seem to need, to suffer
 much,
 Thrive like the hardy vetches of the
 ditch—

And while the ill-fed peasants slowly tread
 The meagre pathways of their poor
 estate,
 The brightest, sweetest blossom may lie
 dead
 In yet the noblest palace of the great.

The young prince sickens while the peasant
 thrives,
 Or, lives, at least, the measure of his
 days—
 There is no sanctity in human lives,
 Nor any safety in our mortal ways.

AH! FAR AWAY—.

Ah! far away seem now those dreamy
 times
 When under tall and native Pines we
 stood,
 And listened to the far-off village chimes,
 Or to the pigeons cooing in the wood.

Ah!—far away those pensive hours when
 we
 Sat in that churchyard where the village
 rests,
 To watch the rooks that in the old elm
 tree
 Settled to sleep upon each twig-built
 nest!

Ah! far away those lonely unwatched
 hours
 When by the banks of some deep,
 sleepy pool,
 We gathered some new bunch of water-
 flowers—
 As summer's scented air grew still and
 cool.

Ah! far away the hours when we would
 sigh,
 With restless longing, for the coming
 years—

Although we nothing knew of that dim
 sky,
 Whose future might be full of storms of
 tears—

We think but now upon those buried hopes,
 The roses gathered but to meet the
 thorn,
 We were as one who in the shadow groves,
 To gather flowers that never may be
 worn!

THE BEYOND.

AGAIN and yet again
 The world rolls on with all its weight
 of woe
 And sin—and still our curious thoughts
 we strain—
 Its destiny, its future doom—to know—

We learn but little more
 Of what lies under Heaven's unbroken
 seal,
 Than in the centuries that have passed
 before,—
 Nor yet what future centuries may
 reveal!

So mystic—so unknown!
 Nay!—and despite the theories of the
 wise
 Of earth, Life's secrets still remain her own,
 Veiled closely from our ever curious
 eyes.

Some light may man discern,
 Even through the mists that shall sur-
 round us here—
 But myriad secrets he may have to learn,—
 Ere yet his eyes are strong, his vision
 clear.

That Life that is Beyond,
 Whose truth is by our very instincts
 taught,
 Whose distance leads the feeble to
 despond,
 Still lies beyond the realms of Human
 Thought.

Yet seems it hard
 To some, to have to learn that man's
 weak mind

By over-work of powers shall but retard
His progress, till his eyes at last grow
blind!

OF THE EARTH—EARTHY.

HE knoweth, of the stars, the moon, the
sun,

That go their changeless rounds in
boundless space,
Not even in what orbits many run,
Not for what purpose that eternal race!

For he may love to dream, yet nothing
knows,

Neither of past, nor future spheres, nor
yet,
As centuries roll their course and centuries
close,
The *why* their suns may rise — the
wherefore set!—

Yes! eager—searching, as may be his
glance,

These secrets still are secrets to his
mind,
So still may be in years that shall advance,
As in the years that he hath left behind.

Few of these mysteries of his life he
knows,

Nor of its first, faint breath, nor how it
came—
The cause of pain and of disease's throes,
Yea! oft times neither cause, nor source,
nor name!

To him a spirit is a Fancy—merely—
And Man—he argues—from a Cell pro-
ceeded!

How came that cell he can't explain,
quite clearly,
For *much* elucidation still is needed!

He loves not — he — this form of fitful
breath—

To feel—to *know* his powers are so con-
fined
That still the secrets of both Life and
Death,
Have been, and are but mysteries to his
mind!

A POOR FAITH.

ONLY to rank with insects — or with
weeds!

Truly the poorest, meanest of all creeds!
A fault—a flaw in all Creation's plan—
An insult to its highest creature—Man!

A lowly ending—for the highest race,
The strongest form of Life—the widest
thought—

'Tis strange such "theories" can hold their
place—
Even when most "scientifically" taught!

At least I'd *trust to instincts!* countless
years,

We may remember, men have calmed their
fears,

And soothed the pangs of pain, the fear
of death,

By one sweet prayer—breathed by their
last, faint breath.

One last, sweet prayer—that we again shall
meet

All those who made this life on earth most
sweet,

Whom we have loved, or suffered for, and
whom

We pray survive beyond the dreary tomb.

Man hath the only life with mind in-
formed,

Almost from earliest periods of his birth—
The only life with high ambition

warmed,
As far above the beasts as Heaven from
Earth.

Ah! trust an instinct—at *the least*—for none
In the mixed nations underneath the sun—
The savage even—but maintains the
creed

That man is somewhat more than—*just a
weed!*

A weed that cumbered earth as centuries
passed,

Only to be uprooted! and at last
However framed and noble he may be,
Still—but *a weed*—unto Eternity!

A TRUE AND OLD LOVE-LETTER.

LOVE! I have felt when the pale moon is
 out,
 And shining down on earth with its calm
 light,
 And bats flit softly, noiselessly about,
 And trees grow shapeless in the deepening
 night—
 As if a thought of bitterness, of pain,
 Could never shadow earth for me again!

T'hen seems the world that God hath given
 us
 Too beautiful, O love! for sin and grief—
 'Tis exquisite to watch its calmness thus,
 To listen to each quivering aspen-leaf,
 Shaking the air with that soft, dreamy
 sound,
 That seems to fear to break the silence
 round—

'Tis even past that peaceful time, when
 soft
 And dusky, deepening twilight hues steal
 o'er
 And veil the sombre pine-woods,—while
 aloft
 In lurid sunset birds of evening soar—
 When moorhens seek the edges of the lake,
 While hares steal softly from the sheltering
 brake—

'Tis then we feel the work of day is
 done—
 The hours of toil again have flitted by—
 And rest descends on earth, and, one by
 one,
 Steal the bright planets into the broad
 sky—
 How softly they may shine on thy far
 dwelling,
 O love! of peace, of rest, of silence
 telling—

Go on in thy bright path, dear one—my
 heart
 Is ever with thee in thy onward way—
 So far away from me although thou art,
 Thy spirit seems with me each hour—
 each day—
 So far apart, and yet with thee I rest—
 My soul with thee—my heart within thy
 breast.

LOOKING BACK.

O! THOU fair spring time of our youth—
 we stand
 On thy green plains and watch the glowing
 flowers,
 Covering with freshest carpets, the broad
 land—
 And take no heed of the swift, flying
 hours!

Now one glad blossom springs into the
 light,
 Scenting with sweetest breath the morning
 air,
 Now love's own roses, gloriously bright,
 And now white lilies—delicately fair—

May-butterflies delight our wandering eyes,
 As we go straying o'er the cowslip
 plain—
 Hearing the merry buzzing of the flies,
 Watching the swallows come, in summer's
 train—

Flitting amongst the water-rushes, sings
 The shy reed-warbler, where few wanderers
 hear—
 And where the dark bough of the fir-tree
 swings,
 The small song of the titmouse meets
 the ear.

Oh! the fair blue-bells and the orchids
 pink!
 The clematis that o'er the hedges trains!
 The fair narcissus by the water's brink!
 The sweet dog-roses, growing in the
 lanes!

THE WORLD IS NEVER STILL.

THE world is never still, there is no
 peace—
 Its steps are ever restless, if not free—
 Neither from toil, nor troubles will it cease,
 Nor through the mists its future shall
 we see.

Some in its home their feeble nets will
 weave,
 With anxious care conceal all shifty
 knots,

In their own weak and trivial threads
believe,—
Nor in their own achievements see the
blots.

There be those o'er whose eyes is drawn
a veil,
To whom no secrets of strong life belong,
To whom the glow of life is ever pale,
While folly's varied tones are loud and
strong—

The nobler soul in them but feebly
speaks,
Neither their passion, nor desires can
rouse,
There is no glow of love upon their cheeks,
There is no ring of honour in their
vows—

Unmarked the paths these meaner foot-
steps tread,
No single flower about their windings
blooms,
They shall, in time, but swell the "crowds
of dead,"—
And weeds, not flowers, will grow upon
their tombs.

THE MARCH OF MODERN IDEAS—OVER "GOD'S ACRES."

"Graveyards should not be closed to children, but
opened to them and to their parents, to supply
the need of gymnastic games and exercises."—Letter
to the *Times*, July 13th, 1883.

We gave space to the dead, of old—we
thought
That something sacred hung about the
place,
Some lesson sad and wise, that might be
taught
Even from the dead unto the living race.

"Dust! dust! these hundred years"—now
is it said—
And soon—"How long must we await"
they cry—
"Before we play at leap-frog o'er the
dead?"—
What matters!—each one in his turn
must die!

"'Tis only sentiment to leave them here
In silent peace; — in this 'progressive
age'
'Tis not the long-dead past that we
revere—
No tears need fall upon life's by-gone
page!

"Graveyards need teach no lessons;—it
were wise
That *we* the need of such should even
forget!—
And turn from them sad contemplation's
eyes—
Only too soon—alas! *our* sun may set!

"Nor is it pleasant that we should
recall
Too oft the lesson of the falling leaf—
The lesson taught by the funereal pall,
That Death is strong and certain—Life
is brief!"

YEAR AFTER YEAR—.

A REFLECTION!

YEAR after year—
Now storm, now sunshine—seasons foul,
or fair,
The crowds of earth move on, through
hope and fear—
And go—we know not where!

Year after year,
New life comes to the world and man is
born—
Some unto darkness, some where skies are
clear—
At night—at noon—at morn.

Year after year,
Man takes his walk across the weary
world;—
And some into a valley strange and drear,
A dark abyss are hurled.

Year after year,
The same strange tragedies of earth
repeat—
Now the bright smile, and now the bitter
tear,—
Now Death betrays our feet!

Year after year—

Through centuries past, it may be more
to come—

As though our longing sight shall never
clear,

Our future Life—is dumb!

Year after year—

We wait — and yet for centuries may
wait—

And yet we know not when the hour draws
near,

For us to pass the strange, mysterious
Gate!

OUR LOST TREASURE.

THROUGH the calm listening sky the voices
ring

Of merry souls, as midnight's heavy wing
Shrouds the pale moonlight scene in which
I stray,

Musing o'er memories of a buried day.

Yes! years ago I heard that same glad
song,

That same light strain of music—Ah! how
long

Hath been the past—whose visions come
between

That time of tempests and this moonlight
scene!

Where are the fingers that once played that
strain!

Shall they ne'er wake on earth its notes
again?

And they that listened, with Love's beating
heart,

Are they for evermore, on earth, apart?

Some rest in strange and distant lands,
and wake

To earthly sounds, to earthly scenes no
more—

They sleep the sleep that we can never
break,

By any spell by mortals tried before!

Yet to recall the past we often strive,
With all sweet semblance of its outward
show—

Only the sweet, sad memories revive—

The last—last treasures left to us below!

THE FADING FLOWER.

IN the sweet summer sunlight, one fair
day,

A flower drooped mournfully its slender
head,

Upon its feeble stalk it idly lay,
Its budding leaves were crushed—its
petals dead—

Alas! the tender green—yet frailer white!—
Its perfume, once so delicate and
sweet!—

The blush-rose colours, never coarsely
bright—

That lit with joy the forest's calm
retreat!

The stately stalks the world once saw so
straight—

That held these blossoms with such
modest grace—

Now they all bend down with their own
dull weight,

Nor of their early strength is left a
trace—

The bloom of old no longer shall we view,
The hand of Time paints many bitter
changes—

Young forms of life no more shall it
renew—

The cold wind of our planet dis-
arranges:

Yet there are mosses charitably sown—

On which the leaves fall, as they fade
away—

And there the blighted flowers, or seeds
o'erblown,

May rest until a fairer, sweeter day!

MUSING.

How idly and how thoughtlessly we mark
The hours that yet with such sad swift-
ness fly,

Death's warning seeks us often in the
dark,

Though scarce less often in the early
sky.

And yet to some there are far other days,
 When even our dull, our inattentive ears
 May catch the plaintive echoes on our
 ways,
 Of past misfortunes — vanished hopes,
 and fears.

For truly is it certain—that grim Time
 Is not the *only* tyrant that we dread,
 Save when *with* him may march disease, or
 crime,
 Keeping a ghastly measure with its
 tread!

Sometimes full bitterly we moan and sigh,
 To see those steps of the stern power so
 fleet—

The deepening of the darkness of the sky,
 With the unfaltering of his steady feet!

And as each deep bell of the hour shall
 toll—
 Each note shall bring us nearer to the
 close
 Of all things here—nearer the final goal
 That all must gain, ere they shall find
 repose!

PREPARING FOR REST.

SOFTLY and low the autumn winds are
 sighing—
 For winter's chilly breath is in the air,
 Slowly the summer's latest flowers are
 dying,
 The elm tree's stately boughs look stark
 and bare.

And faintly, dully now the birds are sing-
 ing—
 Their joyous daylight closes but too
 soon—
 And noiselessly the weary rooks are
 winging
 Their homeward way in the yet early
 noon.

And tenderly the fragrant lily layeth
 Its head upon the cold and sunless bed—
 The chilly mist the closing year be-
 trayeth—
 The sunset sky is purple, darkly red—

And closely now those creeping fogs are
 veiling
 The pallid, sickly—slowly weakening—
 light,—
 The glow of old with winter's sternness
 paling,
 As earth's still landscape passes into
 night.

Ah! slowly, peacefully are all preparing
 For rest — that rest whence Hope
 eternal springs—
 And still of neither love, nor light despair-
 ing,
 Although we watch Life's Angel fold her
 wings!

PEACE COMETH!

AH, love! this shade is sweet!—here will
 not come
 The voices of mean spite and vulgar
 hate—
 And o'er us stretches Heaven's now placid
 dome—
 Peace cometh! even though the hour be
 late.

See'st thou! all things go softly to their
 rest—
 The rooks fly homewards in a dusky
 flock,
 The dove is nestling in her lover's breast,
 The sea-gulls gather to the wave-girt
 rock—

And in the tender sweetness of the hour
 One feels the smaller, meaner things
 below
 Have lost their bitterness—let slip their
 power,
 Faded—with shame—before the sunset's
 glow!

How small seem now some well-known
 bitter minds,
 That yet, as gnats, may wait for
 "better" times!
 To come like witches, on the Sabbath
 winds,
 And almost dare to shriek in Sabbath
 chimes!

Yet such, like all things mean, must have
 their day,
 Then leave their fading paths to stronger
 souls,
 Who calmly march upon their onward
 way,
 With nobler burdens, to far nobler
 goals!

AGAIN—MUSING—.

YES! the unloved depart—the pure and
 sweet
 And tender links remain—
 Still echoes back the sound of faithful
 feet,
 From forest and from plain—

The loved are ever with us—ever here—
 Though we see not their faces—
 Their well-known voices yet sound sweet
 and clear,
 In all Life's honoured places—

The evil things of life pass slowly by,
 As weeds of earth they wither—
 'Tis only now and then a gusty sky
 Again may waft them hither—

The sweet fruits of our trees, unstained,
 unspotted—
 Still some fair boughs shall grace—
 But from the paths where they lie fallen,
 rotted—
 Our footsteps we retrace—

And if the bitter apples still remain
 'Tis as neglected fruit—
 And if they fall, dishonoured on the plain,
 Men pass them by for some more fair
 pursuit.

THE STARS ARE SHINING—.

To —.

THE stars are shining softly on the sea,
 The evening air is of the gentle west—
 Come down upon the beach, dear one,
 with me,
 It is the hour of day we love the best!

There we may be alone and calm, nor
 meet
 The tumult of earth's ever restless
 crowd—
 The breath of summer hours is soft and
 sweet,
 The voice of summer nights is rarely
 loud.

For there are moments that feel half
 divine,
 When we, awhile, the blows of fate
 forget—
 And rather note, in peace, the pale moon-
 shine
 Than sorrow for the brilliant suns that
 set.

And musing underneath the ocean sky
 We learn a truth that seems to some un-
 known,
 That there are joys that neither fade, nor
 die,
 Except through some weak folly of
 our own!

Once more—forget the sorrows that are
 past—
 Remember, love, when skies are dark
 and drear,
 And when the sullen sea is overcast,
 Earth nears the very hours of light and
 cheer!

THE VOICE OF DAME ORACLE;

OR,
LAYS OF THE PHARISEES.

1885.

A FEW WORDS WITH OUR CRITICS BY THE WAY.—I.

"GUSHING THANKS!"

"Stories—more racy and concise than most English novels, and to the full as interesting."—*Life*, January 22nd, 1884, on the 4th vol. of *In the Watches of the Night*.

I THANK thee for that kindly critique,
friend!

For such as thou I write with grateful
pleasure—

I'll look for more praise ere I reach—the
end!

'Tis *helpful* reading, in the hours of
leisure!

Not that these words suffice, for I shall
hope

Yet other works to come will meet thy
praise;

For *some sharp souls* we offer not a *rope*—
But they will find one, doubtless, on
their ways!

A hint—alone—and I will say no more—
One would not spoil *some* critic's easy
trot—

A hint that hath been proffered oft before,
And sometimes acted on and sometimes
not.

One hears about the shift-y weather-vane
Of public favour, but for *me* is more
Than this, and it were easy to explain
Why *I* have of abuse no measured store!

Not that I mind it!—surely one were made
Of feeble stuff to care for any such—
Nor shall I fight from any ambuscade—
Like some! but—"put my fortune to the
touch!"

II.

ESPECIAL THANKS!

"*In the Watches of the Night*." A series of charming little poems, many of them tenderly written and reverent and serious in tone."—*British Medical Journal*, Jan. 31st, 1885.

THESE words from thee, my friend, I gladly
greet—

I do not value praise from others less,
That praise from thee I hold as doubly
sweet,

Nor is, methinks, the reason hard to
guess!

I thank thee, therefore, if but in few
words,

For I dared scarcely hope that ear of
thine

Might listen to the praise of wild sea-
birds,

Or break of waves, that in the starlight
shine!

Thou dost not judge as one of a mere
trade—

Still art—like all the rest—to me un-
known—

Save when confession once in rage was
made:

I "judge my critics" by their words
alone!

Should I e'er lighten *one* o'er-studious hour
By any echo of sweet summer's strain—

By any memory of bird, bee, or flower,
I shall not feel that I have sung in
vain!

III.

SOMEWHAT "SADLY SOLEMN."

"Exceedingly good verse, though of a somewhat sadly solemn character."—*The Kentish Observer*, Jan. 29th, 1885.

O! GENTLE critic—thou shalt yet have fun,
If only thou can'st midnight "snoozes"
shirk,

NOTE.—If in the following pages "The Voice of Dame Oracle" may seem rather monotonous, it must be remembered that the verses were composed at different and often distant intervals, although here collected.

For, truly, is my work but partly done,
Nor shall even break of morning stay
that work!

Thou shalt have other pictures than of
sorrow,

If thou, my good friend, can'st but wait
a while—

Be patient, then, though till a distant
morrow,
And I will sing thee songs to make thee
smile.

'Tis true, as we all know, some cannot
laugh—

Though we hope that fate falls not to
thee—

Again—some know not how to mix the
draught

That tickles—that may be *my* case, you
see!

Solemn Malvolios, also, do abound!

But *we* will never join that class—*will*
we?

For merry laughter hath a pleasant sound,
And earth, without, no "*end*" of dull
might be!

At all events, I'll simply do my best—

And no one can do more, it is con-
fessed!—

And if thou can'st not laugh—then—neither
I!

And both shall sit down in the "*dark*"
and—cry!

IV.

AGAIN—TO OUR FRIENDLY CRITICS.

WHO COMPLAIN OF OUR POEMS BEING
OF A "*SADLY. SOLEMN CHARACTER.*"

Good friends, you may be right; I don't
deny

That most great poets of the world were
sad!!

Look at our Shakespeare—did not Juliet
die,

Macbeth do murder—Hamlet just go
mad?

Yes! there were Dromios, doubtless—in
their places—

And others like them, but they made
less mark—

And always ran, we know, less wondrous
races

Than others ran, whose courses were
more—dark!

Still, if I have one, but *one*, spark divine,
Shall it not glow most brilliantly by
night!

Shall it not in poetic moonlight shine,
Rather than in the mid-day's garish
light!

I know that some esteem it is unwise,
To say no more, to sing but songs of
sorrow,

To bring the tears into our mournful eyes,
While waiting for the breaking of the
morrow.

And I—I would not wish to be a cloud,
However moon-touched, *yet* a cloud—to
any!

Nor should the head with grief be always
bowed,

But sometimes lifted for the good of
many.

So have I kept the *second* of the series
Of "*Watches*" only for the sound of
laughter!

I hope not of the sort than *only* wearies,
But of the sort that leaves one merry
—after!

At any rate, this second shall comprise
Four volumes only! yes! believe! —but
four!!!*

The great thing being, for so say the wise,
To write so that your readers wish for
—more!

V.

HINTS FOR A CRITIC OF "ANOTHER" TEMPER.

THE greatest fun, methinks, I ever had,
Was when a critic "*incoherent*" called
me!

* Refers to the 6th Vol. "*Edition for the Million.*"

The funny — funny fellow! was *he*
mad—
Or would he as a lunatic have walled
me?

Had he been—hum! hum! hum!—so that
his eyes
Were slightly “obfuscated!”—and his
brain
Rather too wandering to be *quite* as
wise
As usual—but this point we will not—
strain!

But rather put a “*fine* point” on’t—and
deem
He, like some “poets,” *had* gone mad
awhile!
And though he did his best still sane to
seem,
He could not, *quite*, the “cunning one”
beguile!

A madman always thinks another
mad!
The “incoherent” brain is quite
unable
To see what others see — the world is
bad
And *shifty*—to a soul *itself* unstable!

Oh! ’tis a funny tale—one meet for
laughter—
And there was *more* than fun, they say,
in *this*—
And Jill must fall, and Jack come tumbling
after!
And then what followed was—was *not* a
kiss!

VI.

SAME TO THE SAME.

“WAIT for the end”—thou gentle critic
—ere
Thus seeking more of thy wild blows
to strike—

One you had read, no doubt, but *is* it clear
The *whole* eighteen need to be *just*
alike? *

A dozen novels once were written!—one
Was quite unlike the rest for certain
reasons—
For all one’s works are not by pattern
done—
Nor always framed at the same lucky
seasons!

Think! if one work of *thine* had favour
met
Need it be *all* the rest “too much”
would prove!
We might bring forth this “theory”—and
yet
Not be *quite* sure that it would meet
with—*love!*

Don’t think we bear you malice—by no
means!—
Of your “remarks” we need say only
this,
That each a very, *very* bright one
seems,
And yields us all that *fun* may yield,
of bliss!!

OUR DUNCE—HIS GRAMMAR!

I.

“The bad habit of the writer, *or* the monotonous
mournfulness of the sea, *have* prejudicially affected
the verse, which is *invariably* unfortunate in subject.”
—*Peterborough Advertiser*, May 3, 1884.

GRAMMAR! my good friend—do not *quite*
ignore her!
That’s done by the—*uneducated* class—
You ought, however big, to bow before
her,
And not thus figure as an ignorant—*ass!*

Unless you know her, you can have no
right
To put those coarse feet on an author’s
land—
Go! read by Education’s steady light—
Practise — in writing Murray — a clear
hand!

* “One volume of these poems might have been treasured, but eighteen!” — *Literary World*,
Aug. 29th, 1884. The “Unfortunate Subjects” were the sorrows, trials, faithfulness, and happiness of true
love. Poor Critic!

Don't speak of misprint—clearly this is
 none—
 Nor would you e'er *yourself* admit such
 plea
 In case of others. — Ha! my friend—
 undone
 By your own spite, as any one may
 see!

I pity — though I laugh — and I would
 say
 No doubt that you to school were never
 sent—
 Like others we have met upon our
 way!
 And yet on *teaching* seemed so madly
 bent!

O! I do thank you and all such as
 you,
 My critic, for reviews that are so *funny*—
 We never think, of course, of ill-made
 "glue"—
 Only of the sweet taste of purest honey!

II.

CRITIC! such words are clever—every one!
 There's something wonderfully bright
 about them!
 They have caused, candidly, so much of
 fun,
 I had sighed "muchly" had I been
 without them!

What "habit" is it that you feel so
 "BAD!"

O! you—of all our critics most sharp-
 witted!
 Methinks that you must be in "motley"
 clad—
 While on your head a cap and bells is
 fitted!

Poor verse! — affected by some strange
 "bad habit!"
 Though what this is, our friend can give
 no hint!
 He "hides him" in a hole, as hides a
 rabbit—
 A deep, dark hole, through which no
 daybeams "glint!"

Something has "pre-ju-dic-i-ally af-fec-
 ted"
 Your *brains*, it seems, though *what* we
 will not say!
 Something is in thy sight wrongly
directed—
 So thou can'st see not even the "time
 o' day!"

III.

YES! my "bad habit *have*" my verse
 affected!
 Thy English might make even a rustic
 stare!
 Such ignorance as this I scarce expected,
 High though mine expectations doubt-
 less were!

Or the monotony of our great sea
 "Have" done it—though you seem quite
 puzzled *which*
 "Have" greater, or worse influence, on
me—
 Truly such grammar sounds a little—
rich!

It shows the educated brain, you
 know,
 Quick to review a "thing"* that all
 confess
 The untaught—vulgar—should be somewhat
 slow
 As judges to the very front to press!

Thy want of schooling brings thee, friend,
 to shame—
 To what old folks would call a "silly
 pass!"
 Reveals to all that "Hodges" is thy
 name,—
 Again the lion's skin but hides the
 ass!

My verse, then, my bad habit "*have*"
 made bad!
 Or the great sea "*have*" done it, one of
 two;—
 Oh! that such sin should be "*are*" very
 sad!—
 But—*you have stolen our Reviewer's
 shoe!*

"ABOUT LOVE—THAT
BALDERDASH."*

WHAT said our Reynard in the days of
old!

He, certes did not sing a grateful hymn
When feeling he was left out in the cold—
And that the luscious grapes were not
for him!

Rather—one envious glance! and then he
vowed

That albeit they looked sweet they were
but sour—

And some for shifts like his are not too
proud,

Even as we see, in this more modern
hour!

No! they were not for him — unhappy
brute—

They hung too near the heavens—beyond
his reach—

And therefore that such fruit is acid fruit
Is henceforth the *sharp* lesson he would
teach!

Poor thing! yet sometimes — something
whispers still—

Thy bitter sentence is less true than
loud—

That if indeed thou could'st but have thy
will

The fruit to pluck thou might'st not be
too proud!

But that *another* should to taste have
power—

Who reaps a rich reward from such a
feat!

Alas! the very dream of this is sour,
Beside which sourest fruit had been but
sweet!

AGAIN—"VERSE INVARIABLY
UNFORTUNATE IN SUBJECT!"

Peterborough Advertiser.

THINK you we see not through that bril-
liant flash

Of wit—of sarcasm—oh! critic dear!

With which, no doubt, you thought to
make a dash—

One to be "treasured" in your bright
career!

I've pleasant dreams of Peterborough—
yes!

Of dwellers in that neighbourhood—from
whom

I often gifts receive, and gifts to bless—
Of flowers of early and of tender bloom.

But—dwellers of a class who might be slow
To greet you—did they meet you on
their way!

Not creatures of *your* kind—oh! *dear* me
no!

Of quite a different sort and breed are
they!

Ah! kindly souls of the true English type,
Not such as *you resemble in the least*—

But in whose gardens fruits are fair and
ripe,

Not *sour*—as *yours*—and withered by
the east!

Yes! thoughtful souls, with *educated*
brains—

With hearts that glow with a true English
glow—

Again—not of *your* kind, that take such
pains

To throw mud at their fellows — Once
more NO!

HOW CLEVER IT THINKS
ITSELF!

How clever it thinks itself—this little one!
With its baby sauciness—its baby wit!

And so will it dream that ink of "its"
will run

Till the whole world stops awhile,
admiring "it!"

Don't think that we here exaggerate—good
gracious!

Just know some people that *we* have
known, that's all!

For the vanity of some is so voracious
That a shark but a "moderate" creature
you might call!

And to think that vanity, in the slightest way,
Might even for a passing moment stand aside!—
Look out! look out! for there is "the devil to pay,"
He stands in the "dark" and will not be denied!

Few people beyond *these* Critics *much* impress you
With the thought of their *inordinate* conceit—
Or even disgust, if they don't quite distress you—
In whatever path you their *splay* foot-steps meet!

Oh! the poor souls—they use with such delight
Some little phrase that they get up with much care!—
And hope that it may conceal their bitter spite—
Yet is oft our "Johnny"—*too late*—for "the fair!"

"TO-DAY, TO-DAY—UNHAPPY DAY—TOO LATE."

Richard II.

Another quotation from Our Duncie, with regard to his critique on *Too Late—Poems of Love*—"that balderdash." *

"TO-DAY, to-day, unhappy day, too late"—
As he the greatest of all poets said—
I pity thee—O Critic! for thy fate—
But thou must lie as thou hast made thy bed!

Yes! in condemning, O unhappy one!
"Too Late" thou wert *too late*—alas! once more—
It was a feeble race that thou did'st run,
Not to come somewhat sooner "to the fore!"

Too late—too late—the strong and honest pen
Of upright critics put thy rage to shame—
Soured first by even our praises of good men,
And women*—thou whose lips were lips of blame!

Then, seeking more of thy wild blows to deal
As a *fresh* volume met thine eye of rage—
Until thy very senses seemed to reel,
And words *illiterate* marked thine angry page!

"To-day — to-day!" Alas! "unhappy day!"
Thou hapless Critic—yet again we say—
Go to! thou dost not seem to love the light—
Yet dost abhor the *Watches of the Night!*

TO —

OH! if you knew, friend, *who* our critics are!
What the reviewer often is who sits
In judgment on some "literary star,"
You might just laugh yourself, friend, into fits!

Some are no more reviewers than are quacks
Our good physicians!—often not as much!—
Not only place—position—each one lacks,
But often has of learning scarce — a "touch!"

And, like the schoolboy in a certain song,
'Twas "little Greek *and* Latin" that *ours* knew!
About that famed "tu quoque" they were wrong—
And Phintreas — our good Phintreas — turned them blue!†

* In "Versus a Woman, Pro Women!"

† This refers to a blunder of one of the Author's reviewers, who called her to account for not spelling Phintreas "Pythias!"

Ah, no! not *blue*—the *learned* only wear
Minerva's colours—these they had disgraced!

Truly, an odd, a funny shape was
there!

Not one to be upon a column placed!

Poor things—with all their blunders and
their rage—

Oh! and so careful never to be seen!

One feels that they have filled no pleasant
page—

From which instruction only one may
glean!

AGAIN TO OUR DUNCE.

With a quotation from a review that he may *not*
have seen! *for* "him" intended to help him in
forming his *next* opinions!

"To all who can appreciate romantic poetry of the
natural order they (*In the Watches of the Night*)
will afford intense delight."—*Chester Chronicle*, May
roth.

POOR soul! they don't afford *thee* much
delight!

The tears of joy are scarcely in *thine*
eyes

While reading these "dark" *Watches of*
the Night—

Although the moon shone down from
May's sweet skies!

How mocking must appear to thee these
words!

For nothing of romance *thy* soul can
please—

What unto thee the song of summer
birds!—

What unto thee the buzz of summer
bees!

And love is only "balderdash," you
say—

Whose songs you would upon this earth
might cease—

But more of this, good friend, another
day—

For "mum" is now the word—so sleep
in peace!

A "BRITISH INSTITUTION!"

AGAINST my Critics I no anger feel—
Nor should I, if I did, my "views" conceal!*

Yes! the *real* Critic, free from rage and
spite,
One calls a British Institution" —
quite!

But—calling themselves Critics—on each
page
Do some inscribe but bitterness and rage—
Who have no claim to that "dark" robe
they use,
And whose design is—only to abuse!

Our Press is free—'tis boasted in this
day,

Though some may take no bold, no open
way—

But some can't interfere with this—what
then!

Only a goose cares for a goose's pen!

If I think only of the fun—no more—

I *do* enjoy it, as I said before—

Yet this, no doubt, some scarcely *can*
believe—

Still — like one Mrs. Gamp — "I *don't*
deceive!"

Yes! I enjoy a good and honest fight—

Even in my well-loved "Watches of the
Night!"

But then it must *be* honest—not the sneak-
ing,

Sly warfare of which one has here been
speaking.

TO —.

FIRST, solid meat, and *then*, the sweets,
you know!—

Yet our next course is not to be *too*
sweet—

Not decked with only flowers of crimson
glow,

But something that your lighter moods
shall greet!

* "Versus a Woman, Pro Women,"

And for dessert await awhile, my friend—
Our promises shall not be mean and hollow,
Wait and be patient—Critics—till the end—
Wait! for another “Phintees” may follow!

And—friend—whenever I may weary you,
So far from being mortified, or vexed,
I shall but think your proper thing to do
Is — just to rest — although you say,
“What next!”

And *all* shall not be “solemn” — surely *no!*

And some as merry rivulets shall flow—
Others may even anger *certain* ears—
And not be *greatly* “treasured,” so one fears!!

And tastes will differ, like our hearts and brains—

And what suits *John* good *Thomas* only pains!
Ann frowns when *Sarah* giggles—but “all right!”

As Britons say—and now I’ll add—good night!

THE VOICE OF DAME ORACLE.

“I am Sir Oracle?
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark.”
Merchant of Venice.

I AM Dame Oracle!! the judgment-seat
Is mine by right—yes! given me unsought!

My counsels mind you hear and then repeat—

The world would thus be taught!

For *I* am of the judges! *I* was formed
To rule this naughty world, and *I* have done it!

The outposts of all subjects *I* have stormed—

Both fought my fight and *won* it!

All things upon this common earth *I* know—

Or rather all *things needful*—some are not!

Yes! some things are contemptible—are *low*—
That—truly, *I* forgot!

Of Folly’s alphabet *I* know each letter,
From the beginning to the very end!
I read men’s wicked *thoughts*—none read them better—
Whene’er *I*—*condescend!*

This duty is much needed—sin *will* sprout,
By feeble eyes unnoticed—from below!
I know full well the work *I* am about,
Though others may not know!

Enough of folly constantly we meet—
The paths of life are not all gold and shine—

But there’s much glory in the judgment-seat,
A glory wholly mine!

Therefore hear—when *I* speak!—ye foolish ones—

Let each one, as his earthly race he runs,

Consult *me*, both at morning, and at night—

Therewith be satisfied — *I’ll* set him right!

THE MODERN PHARISEE.—I.*

OBSERVE THE RACE OF PHARISEES.

OBSERVE the race of Pharisees! who order all their ways

With calmness and with patience that is *quite* beyond all praise!

You weary of their counsel!—would avoid them!—*When* you can,

I shall be *quite* the first to own you something more than man!

’Tis hard to “cheat” the Pharisees!
they’re always on your “tracks”—

Especially when others, as they think, have “turned their backs!”

Especially if Fortune, that seemed once so kind a friend,

Now broadly hints that even *her* kindness *sometimes* has an end!

* In 1857, Countess Pauline Neale, writing to the Countess of Westmorland about some Pharisaical people she had met, says, “What I dislike most are the ‘superior persons,’ who make me whisper to myself, ‘How hateful you make goodness.’”

'Tis then you hear them sweetly whisper—
 "Ah! I told you so!
 If, in *our* wiser footsteps you had *only*
sought to go!
 You can't expect *us*, now your folly brings
 you into grief,
 To leave our graceful leisure, just to come
 to *your* relief!

"You should have done as *we* have done—
 stood quite 'apart' to pray,
 You might not meet with sorrow, like
 'those sinners' on their way—
 Yes! it were well had *you*, with true and
 honourable pride,
 That hour when trouble weighed *them*
 down, have meekly sought our side!

"Instead of this, you looked upon the
 World as all your brothers!
 And scorned to walk, as we have walked,
 in better, holier paths—
 You would not class them as *we* always
 class them, as—'those others!'
 But chose to visit them, sit by their tables,
 and their hearths!"

THE MODERN PHARISEE.—II.

I SPEAK of those once known to me—to
 few,
 But only few, because they "lived
 apart!"—
 Secluded from the world's too-prying view,
 And safe from its "mean" soul and
 "vicious" heart!

For O! they were so good!! and few
 around them
 Were fit associates for *themselves*—they
 said!
 And all the laws of "holy living" bound
 them
 Not with the WORLD to drink, nor break
 their bread!

This "life apart" seemed all their mean
 ambition—
 Whose "holiness" had stamped their
 very features!
 Their "purity" was even as a partition
 Between themselves and all their fellow
 creatures!

Yes! "Holier than thou," breathed from
 their faces,
 When hustled by the WORLD's irreverent
 crowd—
 And smiled through all those meekest airs
 and graces
 And *specious falsehoods* that their
 "creed" allowed!

"Touch not the unclean thing!" was on
 their lips—
 "Avoid the common sinner's mean
 abode!
 Avoid the weak and shun the fool who
slips,
 And stains his garments in the world's
 black road!"

Again!—"Live here a *life apart*—nor
 touch,
 The hem of even a sinning wanderer's
 gown!
 We are too holy to be 'mixed' with
 such—
 So shall we win, from Heaven, 'the
 holy crown'!"

THE MODERN PHARISEE.—III.

Too often, far, we meet with these mean
 souls,
 These falsest of all shepherds to the
 sheep—
 These leaders to life's most unholy
 goals—
 These trimmers of "ghost-lights" upon
 the deep!

Professing loudly, in the face of day,
 Their steps, alone, "lead upwards. For,"
 cry they,
 "The path ye others follow with such zest
 Is not *ours*, brethren—therefore, *not the*
best!"

"The race of the Apostles is not ended—
 For we, oh! brethren, are from Paul
 descended!
 Let each poor creature whom dark sin
 o'erwhelms
 Ask *us* to lead him to—the 'Upper
 Realms!'

"For certainly, *we—only—* know the way—
All other teachers only lead astray!
We know how man must *fan* the holy
spark
Of light, that guides the 'holy,' through
the dark!

"Yes! come to us, ye sinners — *we*
can tell
Which path will take to Heaven and
which to Hell
Ha! *we—alone—* to stumbling feet can
show
The upward path, and that— which leads
below!"

THE MODERN PHARISEE. IV.

WRAP up in a strong mantle of conceit,
They tread the earth with mean, yet
boastful feet
They call the world a world of pride and
greed —
And boast their own as but the one pure
Creed!

"Yes! we are saints" — they cry — "the
others sinners —
They run the race, but—*we* walk in as
winners!
And they may toil—and hope! but we
know well
That *we* are 'booked' for Heaven the
rest—for Hell!

"The prizes given by men *their* souls
allure—
Their thoughts are poisoned, while *our*
thoughts are pure!
They have *poor* notions! they have com-
mon pride —
Their views are narrow, while *our* views
are wide!

"We have a higher destiny than others.
Save only, it may be, our humble
brothers —
Those, only, of meek spirit, lower grade,
May share that Sphere that Heaven for
us hath made!

"Come follow in our steps, would ye be
wise! —
Hear with our hearing—see ye with our
eyes—
For we are even as Paul the holy Paul—
Like him we have a Mission and a
Call!"

THE MODERN PHARISEE. V.

O PHARISEES!—ye Pharisees—meanest of
human races—
Who take, who often hold, on earth such
easy, pleasant places —
O Pharisees! ye Pharisees—keep well out
of our path,
You may not figure as *our* friend, nor sit
beside *our* hearth!

O Pharisees! ye Pharisees to your own
precincts keep,
Come not into our pasture-lands, nor steal
amongst *our* sheep,
Follow thine own pursuit, mock saints!
and keep you "quite apart!"
We are no company for your sleek body
pious heart!

O Pharisees! ye Pharisees—who lurk in
many corners —
And think that of the Christian world ye
are its chief adorners!
Ha! yet what sweet, pet vices hide, in
shadows of the night —
At any rate where ye can just *protect* them
from the light!

Oh! what delightful little faults — what
charming little sins,
For the company of friends the dearest—
Smith and Jones and Binns,
We hear, are daintily served up, to make
some small amends
For the cool contempt of Guelphs and
Howards, and all finer "friends!"

O Pharisees!—ye Pharisees with what a
tender smile,
Your little scandals comfort, first a sister,
then a brother!

How pleasantly the hours of social meetings you beguile,
With kindly little legends, first of one, then of the other!

O Pharisees!—ye Pharisees—meanest of human races—
Who take, who often hold on earth, such easy, pleasant places—
O Pharisees!—ye Pharisees—keep well out of our path—
You may not figure as *our* friend—or sit beside *our* hearth!

THE MODERN PHARISEE.—VI.

THEY live secluded—paying small attention
To “other people’s” troubles, joys, or shame—
Or if, indeed, they give them passing mention,
’Tis almost always in a tone of blame!

The World *should* suffer for its sins, they cry!
And face the penalty for all its errors—
It is, indeed, a silly place, they sigh—
One full of stupid rashness, or weak terrors!

“Keep from the World’s most evil paths”
—they say—
“Even if in but right Royal tracks it treads—
Yes! ‘live apart’—and there shall come a day
When greater splendour shall surround *our* heads!

“That World is—all who think they are above us!
Who scorn to follow roads such as *we* follow!
That World is—all who won’t admire and love us—
A wooden Idol—that is huge *and* hollow!

“The World’s that class that thinks not as *we* think!
That looks with scorn upon the paths *we* tread!

The crowd that always stands upon the brink
Of all that lies *below*—below the dead!”

THE MODERN PHARISEE.—VII.

YES! the poor souls!—they think they are “superior”
To all who dwell upon this earthly land;
They hold all other creatures as inferior
To them—*their* type! So fresh from Heaven’s own Hand!

They stigmatise the World. as “all so vile!”
Save their own portion of it—one may note!—

Were it not pitiful one could but smile,
To need the Pharisee so oft to quote!

They think themselves the favoured of their God,
They are His “chosen vessels,” without doubt!
So that their steps the holy pathways trod,
What unto them the sinning crowds without!

’Tis said admiring friends would often tell
A tale the world perforce must know right well!
For work done by *such* left hands—more’s the pity—
The *right* betrays, in village, town, and city!

Strangely secure of their salvation, they trod what was called their own “peculiar” way—
The world might toil—the world’s worn heart might bleed,
Their duty was to preach to it their—*creed*!

The Christian who esteems himself no better
Than others—he of meek and humble heart,
Is what our lawyers might call a “dead letter,”
In that poor world in which those—
“live apart!”

THE MODERN PHARISEE.—VIII.

THEY lived their lives, one saw, but *for themselves*—

And not to help *another's* weal, or woe—
With all their virtues garnered up on shelves—

And only brought out, now and then,
for show!

To them the world was—*not* a world of brothers—

"The *Christian* world" a merely empty phrase!

They did not care to take the paths of others,

'Twas not for them to walk in "wicked ways!"

And the example set by such is this:—

Live only for thyself—for thine own glory!

(Or for dear comfort!) and in time the bliss

Of Heaven will form the sequel of thy story!

'Tis not for them to leave their home of ease

And safety, just to join in some great fight,

To bravely front the "battle and the breeze,"

And wave the flag aloft that waves for right!

It is for *others* thus to fight, that they

In peace may hear the beating of the drums,

That they may go in comfort on their way,
In paths where toil, or danger never comes!

THE MODERN PHARISEE.—IX.

YES! self! and always self! so it appears!

Their lives are passed to win the world's poor praise—

What unto them shall be a sufferer's tears,
So they may take their own untrammelled ways!

Such men and women's thoughts are rarely mixed

With *honest* sympathy for others' woes—
Their eyes are on some longed-for object fixed—

Some crown that in a tempting colour glows!

Such have an eager look upon the face—

A face set, often, in no noble frame—

As though their thoughts were of some showy place

A friend's "Biography" for them might claim! !

And bent on seeking that *poor* prize to win,

Assume the highest objects to pursue—
"Those others" follow pleasure, greed

and sin,

These—Virtue, only, keep before their view!

Truly—to please a friend for such returns,

Is not so rare a case! one lives and learns!—

A poor, mean life, methinks, lived for applause

Of man, not for the love of Heaven's own laws!

THE MODERN PHARISEE.—X.

THUS each demurely follows his own views—

Endeavours his own heart's desire to win—

But while he thus some longed-for prize pursues,

He gravely warns his brother of its sin!

To live for the hereafter hath two meanings,

The one of evil and the other good—

One for a world of hypocritic seemings,
The other—lies beyond a mocking mood!

His—or her—future is—that "after-story,"

Far too much prized by some—one hears it said—

Aught that redounds to their especial glory,

A "nimbus"—shining round a vulgar head!

For this end see you flatter some poor creature,
 Who's willing, for some sly consideration,
 To praise up to the sky your meanest feature,
 So as to meet even *your* high expectation!

Exaggerating virtues—hiding faults,
 Painting you *angel*, much to your elation!
 Forgetful that, while worthy praise exalts,
 Yet flattery is—*the meanest degradation!*

A donkey of another donkey brays—
 And both bray to the world's delight—
 one sees—

A madman whispers of his brother's craze—
 And earth teems with strange oddities like these!

Minds big with wild conceits—of crudest shapes,
 Grotesque as fabled monsters of the deep—
 Apes fashioned even as man and men as apes;—
 The fool may titter—but the wise will weep.

THE MODERN PHARISEE.—XI.

"THE WICKED, WICKED WORLD."

"'Tis not so much that busy world that delves
 And toils for us—in *proper* ways, of course—
 But all that part that differs from ourselves—
 Of evil influence—of wasted force!"

"A wicked world! whose paths are paths of pleasure—
 That doeth things *we* never dream of doing!
 That differs from ourselves in fullest measure,
 Especially from aims *we* are pursuing!"

"A world that will not follow in *our* ways—
 A mocking world we find it hard to teach—

A spiteful world that grudges us its praise—
 To which we feel it hopelessness to preach!

"It is a world from which we *ought* to turn—
 So darkly winding are its ways below—
 A world that we'd *instruct*,—if it would *learn*—
 In what would make it like *ourselves*, you know!

"Alas! its lives are all a huge mistake,
 A weak career of greediness, or sin—
 Oh! if we *could* induce it, now, to take
 Our road—*what future glory it would win!*"

"TO BE SEEN OF MEN!"

THEY do "good" that by man it shall be seen—
 And have no "secrets" veiled from curious sight!—
 Only—affinity with all most mean!
 Only—a love of darkness—fear of light!

They tell all to a "friend," who loudly preaches
 About their "goodness" to the laughing sun!
 Their love of mean laudation rather teaches
 To sow broadcast, that all may reap who run!

O paltry vanity!—love of applause—
 The high ambition but to live to please!
 The earth, methinks, can have but little cause
 To boast itself of vulgar souls like these!

Such people dwell on many a chequered plain
 Of life—sometimes in sunshine—then in storms—
 With empty minds—with souls of coarsest grain—
 Hearts that true Charity but rarely warms.

Were they *true* Christians, *then* that faith were cursed,
 That could produce no better fruits than these!—

Whose flavour almost seems, to us, the
worst
Of all the apples gathered from Life's
trees!

WORDS OFTEN HEARD!

"THIS world," again they cry, "of idle
creeds!"

This world of ugly and distorted fea-
tures!"

(Yet on their *own* paths grow abundant
weeds,

O'erlooked by them, the poor deluded
creatures!)

"Oh! it is sad"—we hear them moan—
"most sad!"

This life of folly, blindness, and conceit!
Its steps are feeble and its heart is bad—
And snares surround its silly, reckless
feet!"

"If men would only listen when *we*
preach—

If men would only follow in *our* ways,
What sweet and holy lessons we could
teach!

What new truths place before their
wondering gaze!"

"Alas! they know not where *their* paths
shall lead—

These strong and haughty ones!—we
seek in vain,

To help them by *our* counsels—yes, indeed!
Our hearts are full of pity and of pain!"

Had such stood even before a looking-
glass

They had not seen themselves as seen by
others!

'Tis possible they might have seen an
ass!—

And one surrounded by his long-eared
brothers!

PEOPLE ONE HAS—HEARD OF!!

THEY *shy* the World!—are far "too good"
for it!

This Christian crowd is "much too
vile"—they groan—

(Of far *too strong!* and that *this fact* may
fit

The case of *some*, we fancy, well is
known!)

To us this only seemed—as many said—
A form of monstrous and of mean con-
ceit—

For narrow would be the paths *they* needs
must tread,

None others, as a fact, would fit *their*
feet!

Despite that depth of vanity, there lies
A secret fear, in their most "inner"
mind—

That ever keeps its hold—and one that's
wise!

*You are not strong enough—keep, then,
behind!*

Yet—let the *world* believe that you *are*
strong—

And by no fear of greater power de-
terred—

Preach loudly that the earth is full of
wrong,

Its crowds of people—*feeble*—that's the
word!

As for its glory—"Psha! *yours* had been
greater

By far, had *you* sought in its steps to
go!"

(But you had peeped into the burning
crater

Of its volcano, and *scarce liked the
glow!*)

Ah! pretty speeches! and full often made—
One needn't go "far afield," if these
you seek;

Paltry excuses—that have oft betrayed
The inmost tremors of the truly weak.

THE VOICE OF THE PHARISEE!

XII.

"O FOOLS!" he cries—"who rule this
troublesome earth—

Ye are a foolish and pig-headed race!

Had ye the faintest notion of *my* worth
This world had been a better, happier
place!"

"Let men but place ME on the judgment-seat,
To judge each weak and sinning mortal's cause,
Then all the world would bow down at my feet,
And follow the loud preaching of my laws!

"Ah! but the world is stupid, deaf and blind—
As blind, at least, as those that *will* not see—

Nothing exceeds the folly of our kind!
The calmer vision but pertains to *me*!"

Such view the "feeble" world with scornful eyes,
Look down upon "those others," and declare
That nothing men can do will e'er surprise
Their minds, although it *may* make them despair!

But if that world the sceptre would but give
To *them*, how they would teach it to obey!
And something like their own "pure" lives to live,
To walk, if only "feebly," in *their* way!

For they all riddles of this Life can read—
Can cut all cords of bondage with "that" knife—
And know why some to Heavenly crowns succeed,
As others pass, as shadows, out of Life!

REBUKES TO A WELL-KNOWN CHARACTER.—I.

As on this "wicked world" thou lookest round,
How darest thou *thyself*, poor creature, hold
As but the only lily on its ground,
The only white lamb in its tainted fold!

By what rule dost thou deem thyself so "pure,"
As certain Heaven, on leaving earth, to win?

Because the world's *coarse* sins may not allure,
Hast thou subdued thy PRIDE—that blackest sin?

Yes! by *what* rule—say!—dost thou *dare* esteem
Thyself as stronger, wiser, than thy brother?
Ah, fool!—thine is a poor, deluding dream,
Thou art the Pharisee—he and no other!

Oh! be thou not so sillily elate!
Rather thy pride, and thy conceit restrain—
Lest thou should'st some day stand at Peter's gate,
And knock; loud and still louder, but—in vain!

For thou may'st call and call—yet none may hear,
Holding no portion of that Heavenly land;
All that upon this earth to thee was dear,
There marks thee LOST—with a too fatal brand!

REBUKES TO A WELL-KNOWN CHARACTER.—II.

THOU dost pretend to be a "Holy Teacher!"—
In thine own fitness strongly hast believed—
Hast thou forgotten, then, thou most poor creature,
The stern rebuke the Pharisee received?

Hast thou for Heaven's forgiveness never prayed—
For courage and for strength to walk aright;
Have those conceited footsteps *never* strayed
From the one path alone that leads to Light?

You cry—"I sin not as *those others* sin!
I seek not *theirs*, but a far higher prize—
They only care the world's applause to win,
But *ours*—awaits us in eternal skies!"

"All sorts of joys those sinful souls
allure—
In greed and vanity *their* hands *they*
steep—
But I!—*my* steps are strong, *my* heart is
pure—
Yes! *I* am saved, and *they* are but lost
sheep!"

Yet may the lost sheep find a place that
thou,
O Pharisee! wilt not—even as of old—
That crown placed by *thysself* upon thy
brow,
Is one of basest metal—not of gold!

THE "PECULIAR" CHRISTIAN! *

I.

We live the Christian's holy life, you
know!

The life that is of purity—of rest—
'Tis not *our* way to make a vulgar *show*,
But just to take the path that Heaven
hath blessed!

We do not *slave* to be as "great" as
some!

We cannot wish *their* tawdry crowns to
win—

Yet greater joys at last to us may come—
To us! unstained by even the smallest
sin!

We never take those paths a sinner loves—
Therefore *our* glorious crown awaits on
high!

We only tread in ways that Heaven ap-
proves—

And so a Christian's saintly death shall
die!

Men's low and common joys were never
ours—

We live "our precious souls," alone,
to save—

And what are all earth's coarse and tawdry
powers

To those that *we* shall have beyond the
grave!

Ah! ours will be *indeed* a time of grace—
A throne your mean eyes need look up
to see!

Then shall we show yon haughty ones their
place,
And—ever more to bend to us the knee!

THE "PECULIAR" CHRISTIAN!

II.

HEARTLESS are they, indeed!
What matters what worn hearts shall be
oppressed—
What sisters', or what brothers' hearts shall
bleed—
Are they not "lifted far above the rest!"

One hears them often urge,
Man's first care is for self—not for a
brother—
Nor can they from that fatal mist emerge
To see the nobler footsteps of another.

One hears them glibly preach—
"You sinners it is not for *us* to know!
It is by our example that we teach—
We go to Heaven, and *you*, alas!
below!

"Too pure and spotless we,
Who seemed marked out for teachers
from our birth!
Who, in a brighter world than this, shall
be
The judges of the 'wicked ones' of
earth!

"Heaven's calm and holy light
Hath ever shone upon *our* humble
path—
We never wander out into the night—
But pray and preach by our own stain-
less hearth!

"Oh! in *our* holy home
Is charity, security, and peace!
Ah! what a better world would this
become,
If such as *we* should in this life—
increase!"

* There was once a set of so-called "religionists" who "dubbed" themselves "Peculiar Christians!" We need say no more than that, in the *worldly* sense, undoubtedly they deserved the title that they arrogated to themselves!

THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN!

I MET a woman—and I would but once!

I met a woman—and I would but *one*—
Who thought each other woman just a
“dunce,”

Her own the only race that we should
run!

Such think themselves too good to “mix
with others!”

Such call their sisters idle—silly—vain—
Careless, or foolish wives — neglectful
mothers—

Feeble of purpose all, and weak of brain.

Such judge each action of another's life,
By idlest passing words, or thoughtless
deeds,

And whether girl or widow—maid or
wife—

Judge even their souls and their religious
creeds!—

“Few take,” they cry, “the Christian's
path below—

The paths of most have many an evil
turn!”

They are not Christians like *themselves*—
you know—

By whom all others *surely* ought to
learn!

One would not care to *often* meet with
such—

Rather are they whom one would pray
to shun!

Like Hamlet's mother—they “protest too
much!”—

Especially in public—every one!

Avoid *them*—wheresoever these *you* meet,
Admit *them* never to your home and
hearth—

Be sure they leave the mark of cloven
feet,

Be it in humble, or in lordly path.

They think themselves so *pure*! yet I
would say

Of all professing Christians *these* *disown*;
“Get thee behind me, Satan!” I would
pray—

“Nor let thy cold hand even touch mine
own!”

REBUKES TO AN

ASPERSER OF HUMANITY!—I.

THOU see'st but on this earth its poorer
view—

Thy life must needs be small—not tem-
pest-tossed—

And love, the love that—*old*, is yet so
new,

May be but as a dream, but seen—ere
lost!

I pity thee—for thou could'st not forget,
Nor scorn it, if to thee had love been
given—

Love that is not in *all* paths doubtless
met—

But met—is truly a foretaste of Heaven!

For had'st thou known that love, thou
had'st not deemed—

For shame,—that *only thou* could'st thus
be blessed!

That *only on thy* path hath even beamed
That joy that is both ecstasy *and* rest!

Therefore—I hold I judge thee not amiss,
In thinking thou know'st neither glow
nor storm

Of life as little of a lover's kiss!—

And that to thee are all things but—
luke-warm!

Thou art, indeed, not formed to speak
of others,

No! life is not what to thine eyes it
seems—

The struggles of earth's sisters, still more
brothers,

Must be, unto *thy* soul, the merest
dreams.

REBUKES TO AN

ASPERSER OF HUMANITY.—II.

YES! thou but lookest for the things of
shame,

For bitter souls that lie beneath Heaven's
ban,

For deeds that may evoke contempt or
blame,

Not for the truer, stronger life of man.

And wandering through the plains thine
eyes will see
How many sprout as weeds that should
be flowers,
Or note the fair leaves of a noble tree,
Only to see the blight of autumn
showers.

And thou wilt pass a field of yellow wheat,
Shining with all the summer's happy
light,
To see what blasted stalks thine eyes may
meet,
How many ears are full of "smut" and
blight.

Thou walkest through our orchards, when
they wear
The saddening aspect of the aging year,
To see what little fruit ill seasons spare,
Or how the leaves fell, ere they yet were
sere.—

And by all this, thou sayest, Life is
taught
How blight is often of our fairest lands,
How much of treasure is but vainly bought,
How much of dross may be in golden
sands.

The sweetest lessons of the earth, to thee
May ever in this life remain unknown—
An untaught pupil thou wilt ever be,
Nor standing in that catalogue alone!

CHRISTIANS ARE THEY?

CHRISTIANS are they? No!
A Christian doth not "boast himself," or
think,
While *he* is as a "shining light" below,
His "brother" stands upon perdition's
brink!

Christians are they? No!
A Christian doth not haste to think no
other
Of either God, or man, the truth can
know,
Or that he must be "purer" than—that
"brother!"

Christians are they? No!
Who, prating of their own "selected"
path,
Yet for their sisters' future are not slow
To prophesy Heaven's dark, eternal
wrath.

Christians are they? No!
Poor types, indeed, were these—who never
pray
"Be merciful to me, O God! a sinner!
For I have often wandered from Thy
way!" *

Christians are they? No!
They are of those that may have long to
wait,
And learn that centuries come, that cen-
turies go,
Ere they may enter through the "Golden
Gate!"

THE HEART OF THE PHARISEE.

FAR rather would I with a "sinner"
dwell
Than with a "Pharisee" at any time!
The latter, as we know, is fit for
Hell,
Though he may seem unstained by
"vulgar" crime!

Oh! of that life the villainous pretence!—
The hand that warns and the uplifted
head!—
The masks behind whose covers he can
fence!—
The saintly step with which he loves
to tread!

Oh! the *sweet* voice in which he metes out
blame!—
The tones of cant so tenderly de-
pressed!—
The wish to spare his fellow-creatures'
shame!—
*Even while he will not let their follies
rest!*

'Tis well, perhaps, that youth is not too
wise—
Suspects so little—is so full of trust—

* We have heard a so-called Christian say that she *never* prayed that prayer, for—she indignantly added—
s she *knew* she was *not* a sinner, it was a prayer insulting to herself and—to Heaven!

Looks on all things with hopeful, happy
eyes,
Even on those metals that the soonest
rust!

His eyes are often on a gilded dome—
The outside beauty of a hollow stem—
The well-kept flowers upon corruption's
home,
The dazzling glitter of a spurious gem!

His heart might wither, did it learn too
soon

What serpents often coil beside his
way—
'Tis better learnt in the calm hours of
noon,
Than in the first light of his golden day.

BY MINE OWN WISH.

(To —.)

By mine own wish we meet not here
again,
Since thou into my path of life hath
brought
So much of undeserved, yet bitter pain,
So much of gloomy and unpleasant
thought.

No! we no more upon this earth should
meet,
So I may grow thy shadow to forget—
And even the sound of thy unhallowed
feet,
Of which the hateful fall re-echoes yet.

There are on earth far other fields than
mine—
Where those unsavoury, heavy steps may
stray!—
Come not between me and the sweet sun-
shine,
That now so calmly smiles upon my
way.

Nothing of grateful, I, of thee, recall—
Nothing of justice have thine actions
shown—

No! never more let thy foul shadow fall
Upon that path that is, at last, mine
own.

For thou did'st seek, in a most shameless
guise,
To steal a crown that *thy* brow *could*
not fit!
To call thee "friend" again, were most
unwise—
A folly I shall hardly now commit!

"THINKING NO EVIL!"

(TO A PHARISEE.)

"THINKING no evil!"—counsel strangely
old,
Yes! offered, even in *centuries* past, to
men—
Yet, early though the days when earth
was told,
That counsel, need we more, methinks
than *then*!

"Thinking no evil!" Yet, beneath the
skies,
Few wars are waged—or puerile, or
great—
But there are those that look on, with the
eyes
That "think the evil" gendered by cold
hate.

"Thinking no evil!" Let thy footsteps
pause
Upon thy neighbour's threshold—see'st
thou not,
O scandal-breeder! *something* that shall
cause
A bitter utterance on his life and lot!

"Thinking no evil!" Dost thou ever
gaze
Upon his wealth, his thrift—his wife, his
child,
Forgetting thou hast spoken in thy days
Of him, as one by shameful deeds de-
filed?

"Thinking no evil!" No! I *know thee*
well!
O Pharisee! lies are thy daily bread!
Aye—and the falsehoods that thy lips
will tell
Even as a very pestilence shall spread!

A LOST FAITH.

DARE not thy face within our dwelling
show,

Thy falsehoods stand between us ever-
more—

For of thy shameless calumnies I know
What I am glad I *knew not*—hereto-
fore!

For it is with unspoken sadness, I
My faith in any one see darkly slain—
I look on such destruction with a sigh,
Knowing the after shadows of the plain!

An error, though it be a cruel mistake,
Shall scarcely, like a crowd of bitter
lies,

Almost our faith in human nature shake,
And force hot tears into unwilling eyes.

To such as ye, such pangs must be un-
known!—

A faith in others' honesty and kindness
One sees not over-pleasantly o'erthrown,
To know one's eyes had been but
eyes of blindness!

Foul lies, O heart of slander!—have been
thine,

Leaving, on *thine own life* a deadly
stain!

And in thy shameless eyes its colours
shine—

Eyes that I pray I may not meet again!

NO LEGS—BUT WINGS.

"A lie has no legs and can't stand, but has wings
and can fly about anywhere."—*Proverb.*

TRUE! true beyond all question! One
has found

Those hideous "insects" in all sorts of
places!

Though most on unclean plains they may
abound

You *also* find, in sunny spots their
traces!

Far from their first unwholesome place of
birth,

Their hateful buzz may fall upon the
ear—

They come from all strange corners of the
earth—

Not one is too *particular*—'tis clear!

Not often can you follow to where first
Was found their filthy presence on the
way,

When into light unhappily they *burst*—
To feed on things of blight and of decay.

From hence they fly to seek the fairest
bowers—

Through the most clear and most sweet-
smelling air—

To visit the most tender, happy flowers—
To go where plums and peaches all are
fair.

Ere long foul grubs will breed within each
core—

Ere long foul grubs will eat the fairest
leaf—

Look, then, for ripeness and for bloom
no more—

They give thee, henceforth, but dismay
and grief.

THE LYING SOUL.—I.

(WORDS OF WARNING TO SOME.)

O! YET again — where'er thy footsteps
tread,

In pacing onwards to the final goal,
Amongst the many paths around thee
spread

Avoid *that* favoured by the "lying"
soul!

For therein surely shall all fruit decay—
So will that rose die—tended with such
care,

In hopes that it might sweeten each long
day—

Whereas it shall but poison, now, the
air!

We speak who *know* such evil steps—have
seen

In every field through which their march
is traced,

A blight on tender buds and leaves of
green—

And where once plenty smiled—a dreary
waste!

O'er all shall be the serpent's deadly
slime,

If once a "liar" in thy garden cowers—
One that may poison, even through all the
time

Thou may'st remain a tenant of earth's
bowers!

That field around thee stretches far and
wide—

There lie some loved—and dead—o'er
whom foul spite

A devil's poison poured—ah! turn aside!
It is too hideous for our human sight!

THE LYING SOUL.—II.

(WORDS OF WARNING TO SOME.)

HE who pursues thee, as thy deadliest foe,
With sharpened weapon gleaming in the
sun,

Thou need'st not as a liar fear, we know,
An open path at least *his* steps shall run!

And thou wilt have, at least, the chance
to seize,

And to unsheathe a weapon on *thy* part—
He will not wound thee as wound all of
these,

Who unseen, and in secret, stab thy
heart!

Oh! they creep near, their lips all
wreathed with smiles,

Pretend to be of friends the "very
dear"!—

And circumvent thee by a thousand wiles—
And poison, with most oily words, thine
ear.

They always *seek thy good*—of that be
sure!—

And o'er thy faults will also "drop a
tear"—

Of that be *very* certain—"sweet" and
"pure"

Are they, who grieve o'er *every* wrong
career!

And they are so unselfish — heart and
mind!—

To do good the fond dream their soul
entices,

Through every hour—so they no time can
find

*For looking after their own hateful
vices!*

A LESSON TAUGHT AND LEARNT!—I.

"A lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest o
lies!

A lie which is all a lie may be met with and fought
outright,

But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to
fight."—*Tennyson*.

O POET! when these words of thine I read,
No greater truth even *thou* could'st write
—I said!

'Tis one that far too bitterly *I* know—

'Tis one *I*, also, learnt—not long ago!

Such lies are those, *some we know well*,
delight in!

With these deceive a conscience not too
nice—

Presenting thus a mixture scarce inviting,
Of just a *little* virtue with MUCH vice!

Some errors of another thus are made

Into some hideous "monsters" by their
fingers!—

One special element is in their trade,

A scent of *Somebody*!—about it lingers!

A child drawn by *their* hand, no mother
knows,

Distortion is to every feature lent!

They spread the vilest mildew o'er the
rose,

Taint, with one drop, the lily's holy
scent.

Yet still it is *your* lily, they declare,

With brazen tongue and with unblushing
cheek—

'Tis still *your* rose—although a rose not
fair!

The world can see that they no slander
speak!

And still they lie! it is another's hand

Hath made that lily what it is—the
"deuce's!"

So have *they* sown the "mildew" on
your land—

And unto them belong—what it pro-
duces!

A LESSON TAUGHT AND LEARNT!—II.

Again—"A lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies."—*Tennyson*.

'Tis a truth that he teaches well—'tis a truth to be always taught,
And the knowledge of which is often but tardily, sadly bought—
'Tis a truth *we* also have learnt too well—too well, thro' many long years,
'Tis a truth that comes to us often, and through the bitterness of tears!

For what "they" may say of us, it is true that we care but little—
All glass of the house *they* built, have the thoughtful shown was brittle—
And yet each lie that they tell by the magic of telling increases—
While the holy mirror of Truth they have smashed, to a thousand pieces!

Alas! there are those we meet whose idea of Truth is such,
You'll find in the tales they tell, of fact there is never a trace—
While the robes they display as fresh are torn with the lightest touch,
As they hold them up to the light, exhumed from a gravelike place!

And they dress up some poor creature—and they draw, as from the life—
While they put in some new touches that shall make it seem more real—
As the form of a vicious man—or a good man's vicious wife,
For whom a heart the mildest could only loathing feel!

For oh! we have heard such tales—we have heard such *shameless* lies,
While the very lips that breathed them seemed full of pitying sighs—
That we oft have thought of a toad that under a clean stone hides,
And swells with its own foul breath till it fills its hideous sides!

Yes! 'tis *indeed* a truth—a truth to be always taught—
And the knowledge of which is often but tardily, sadly bought—

That comes as a dreary cloud, o'er our faithful, trusting eyes—
That "a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies!"

BORN WITHOUT CONSCIENCES. I.

(A COMMUNICATION FROM ONE
SLANDERED.)

THEY have spoken of me no word of honest truth,
They have slandered even my earliest, brightest youth,
Instilled their poison into my fairest bowers,
And rudely trampled upon my sweetest flowers.

In the days of storms, as under a smiling sun,
There is not a single thing that I have done,
From the earliest hours they knew me *to this day*,
But they have defiled it, in some heartless way!

Not a single deed of sacrifice or sorrow,
Hath been my lot, but they from it would borrow
Some colour that never was drawn from Truth alone,
Some sketch, with a hideous outline, *all* their own!

They have lived afar, indeed, from my daily life,
They nothing know, save part of its outer strife,
In the merest trifles were they seen as those
Who walk in the way of your life *but* as your foes.

More brutal hearts have I never known, and yet,
They call it a sin, that I *cannot forget!*
And put, in the hard-earned hours of saddened rest,
The vipers of old once more into my breast!

BORN WITHOUT CONSCIENCES.

II

COWARDS! ye did not seek to war with strength—

But fought concealed beneath the meanest wall!

Ah! if full long in coming, yet at length,
Disgrace and scorn upon your heads must fall.

At times in after years E—— may look back

More calmly on those foes—once on her track—

But *now* — with such disgust, almost despair,

'Tis almost more than *her* tried strength can bear!

That time—that time of such exceeding grief—

That time of suffering—both by night and day—

When death itself had been a glad relief—
Though one for which it had been sin to pray—

'Twas then, when she was helpless, that they spoke

A myriad falsehoods, to their lasting shame—

Ah!—conduct such as *this* may well evoke
The hardest words that human lips can frame.

Cowards! ye did not seek to war with strength—

But fought concealed behind the meanest wall—

Ah! if full long in coming, yet — at length—

Disgrace and scorn upon your heads must fall.

PONDERING—IDLY!

(ON — AND —, &c.)

RARELY, indeed, one meets with hearts like these—

Rarely, indeed, one met with paths like theirs—

They keep your friends but in the hour of ease—

And stab you in the bitter time of cares!

They each will figure as your faithful friend,

When fortune's face upon you brightly smiles—

But whose poor help in *trouble* meets its end!

For theirs are hearts of crookedness and wiles.

No doubt one was too easily deceived—
And showed but little wit and lesser keenness!—

But it was hard for one to have believed
In *possibilities* of so much meanness!

We did not peep *below* the "upper crust,"

As many wisely said we should have done!

In truth we felt that we would *rather trust*—

Than have so greatly loathed a race to run.

Therefore we suffered, as a thousand more
Shall suffer and *have* suffered in the past—

Nor *always* can obtain, when all is o'er,
One sorry comfort—"truth is known at last"!

THE "EMBROIDERED" WORD!

THOU shalt not lie! It is a law, we've heard,

That some were never *seriously* taught!

A lie to them was an "embroidered word"—

As such was hardly worthy of a thought!

And they declare—"embroidering Truth" is not

Like pure *invention*, all but fools can see"—

Besides this—one may say—"Oh! I forgot!"
Or—"I but tell the tale as told to me!"

Or—"So I heard"—that lie that yet is worse!

Since it contains a second bitter smart—

* We have heard certain people, on being accused of a want of "adhesion to fact" in many of their statements, declare that it was being really *too* "squeamish" and particular to think that one might not be permitted to "embroider" Truth occasionally!

A scandal thus becomes a double curse,
A very blight upon a shrinking heart.

Yet this "embroidering"—one has even
been told

Is only giving Truth a *little strain*,
Or *decoration!* Truth is just *too bold*,
At times—its features are *so coarse* and
plain!

Oh! this "embroidering" is, to such, a
task

More sweet than any task that you could
set them,

And it is to no purpose that you ask
Who their informants are—*they quite*
forget them!

It can, then, be no marvel that you hear
Such curious tales told sometimes of a
friend,

Or relative, that come to one, we fear,
With "complications" almost without
end!

A REMEMBERED WARNING.

WHERE look we for our friends?—to hands
held out

Merely with ostentation—not with meek-
ness?

Withdrawn when grief and trouble are
about—

When we succumb to sorrow or to weak-
ness!

Whom shall we call our friends! those who,
at night,

Will bring no help, if Heaven is over-
cast!

Who come with no sweet promise of new
light,

No whisper that the gloom shall soon
have passed!

Whom shall we call our friends! Not
those who load

Your very path with flattery unrefined,
So long as brightness gilds thy very road—

A road unknown to drought, or blight-
ing wind!

Whom shall we call our friends! Not
those, we think,

Who turn against you when the storm
o'erpowers—

Not any of the coward souls who shrink
From walking by your side in trouble's
hours!

Against such we were warned in bygone
times,

And we were angered at the warnings
offered!

And almost treated them as they were
crimes,

Now—know how wise the advice so *long*
since proffered!

UNTRUSTWORTHY!

WHEN are your days but bright and
healthy days,

They load you with full meed of glowing
praise!

So—while you, at the least, keep grief
concealed—

While never shade of trouble is revealed!

Yes! *then* they treat you as their dearest
friend—

To feel all friendship's warmth will they
pretend—

Each step you take is looked upon with
eyes

That seem to hold you as the strong and
wise!

So far—so good! but when the winds arise,
And heavy vapours drift across thy skies,

When all the brightness that you once
enjoyed

Hath paused to leave your fairest flowers
destroyed—

Then run they from you as from a cock-
roach!!

Then are their words but those of sharp
reproach—

They join the ranks of your most spiteful
foes,

And there remain until *the tempest's close!*

And if thou dost not surely close thy gate
They will come stealing through, however

late—

See then thy hasp is sure—that they may
know

Henceforth ye meet no more as friends
below!

HEARTS OF SPITE.

YES! in the days of bitterness and sorrow,
Not *theirs* the warm hand-clasp, or
kindly tear—

Not theirs the gentle voice that bade
“good morrow,”

And prayed the weary, breaking heart
to cheer.

No! but they deepened fortune's cruel
frown;

No! but their touch increased the throb
of pain—

They even pressed the brimming measure
down,

And with their own hands added
poisoned grain!

But when the hidden sun shone out once
more

On sorrow's melancholy, closed abode,
And shadowed life, though never as
before,

Looked less a helpless and despairing
road—

'Twas *then* that, shaping for their own
mean ends,

The paths of life that still before them
lay,

They meanly “postured” once again as
friends,

Assuming none *could* be more true than
they

Unfitted for a sad and troubled hearth

Are ye, the cold of heart, the mean of
mind;

Keep to thine own unsavoury, sunless
path,

For ye are of life's most ignoble kind!

THE VEILED ENEMY.—I.

TRULY—one of the greatest plagues below,
One of the darkest shadows of life's

path,
One of the saddest troubles man may

know,
Is a veiled enemy beside his hearth!

The seeming friend, reclining on thy
breast,

Who in thy joys pretends to bear a
part!

Who comes to thee with songs of peace
and rest,

Then leaves a mortal venom in thy
heart!

Worse than foul canker in the heart of
rose,

It is a devil! as some know too well—
Dealing in secrecy its evil blows!—

From hell it cometh and—it *breathes* of
hell!

What things shall poison *healthy* paths
appear

The taste of joy alone to that black life—
It draws its sustenance from human Fear—

From mortal bitterness, disease, and
strife.

It can betray you with a Judas kiss,
Only some mean, unworthy prize to
earn—

There is no fouler thing on earth than
this,

And whence it came thereto it shall
return!

THE VEILED ENEMY.—II.

YES! in this chequered world we meet
with those

Whose memory shall be as an evil
dream,

Who teach us that a man's most hateful
foes

Are sometimes those who his close com-
rades seem;

Who, when black clouds encircle the
bowed head,

Will leave us, stern despair to face
alone,

Who, when they might have proffered
wholesome bread,

Have given you, in place of it, a stone;

Who only smile on you when Fortune
smiles—

But whom you see no longer in their
place,

If Fate surrounds you with a thousand
wiles

Of evil — then — *you miss them in the
race!*

Their cold, chill skin, it may be, cannot stand

The hostile winds, with, oft, diseases rife—

So they withdraw the friendly grasp of hand,

Under each adverse circumstance of Life!

Grim spirits these, whose despicable wings

Cast on the pilgrim's path the deepest gloom,

Who throw their blight upon Life's sweetest things,

And bring on all the shadow of the tomb!

· SOULLESS!

(A MEMORANDUM.)

"Now, when no longer life's strong paths I tread,

And when all days, in passing, seem alike,

Now, when the clouds are gathered o'er my head,

They—heartless—raise a bitter hand to strike."

"Now, when true hearts are merciful and teach

The lessons they, themselves, by Heaven are taught,

They seek some sore place of my heart to reach—

For unto them its sufferings are nought."

"Now, when the skies of heaven are cold and dark—

And angry, sullen shadows o'er us meet,
They seek not — they — to fan a dying spark—

But rather tread it under their hard feet."

"Now, when the sad and broken heart is clinging

To aught that soothes, or lightens its despair,

The breath of their cold words is sharp and stinging,

Cold as an Arctic wind in Autumn's air."

MORAL.

"NOT in the *summer* of thy days is found,

Upon the paths thou treadest this chill hoar!

But when the darkness veils thy storm-swept ground

There are those who will smile on thee no more!"

THEY PRAY NOT FOR FORGIVENESS.

THEY pray not for forgiveness—nor confess

The wounds they give they little care to heal—

Even if sweet words they speak—thy face caress—

They still a dagger—kept for thee—conceal!

No! God is merciful—yet God's own law

Bids us beware of such—to shun them—nor

Let such creep into thy loved home to rest,

Neither, as friend, recline upon thy breast!

Yes! trust them never—not in hours of ease

And pleasure, not in hours of grief and pain—

The love of Slander is a vile disease—
To seek to cure it hath seemed always vain.

To dwell with such, as friends, were even as though

One mocked at Nature's laws! The wounded deer

Licks not the brutal hand that dealt the blow—

But from his persecutor turns with fear.

Nor can they for a shameful past atone—
Their punishment must rest with Heaven alone—

But would'st thou no communion hold with lies,

Look never more, as friend, into *those* eyes!

OUR SPITEFUL GOSSIPS!

WHO relish, as *they* relish, each sweet tale
The lips of liars dearly love to speak!
Who when a dark tale's told will never fail

Some even greater darkness there to seek!

Who greedily a dish of scandal sip,
Surely it is *these* creatures of all others
Whose word of comment is a scorpion whip,

With which they flay their sisters and their brothers!

Whose dull eyes glisten as *their* eyes will glisten,

To hear of some poor *thing* whose feet have "slipped"?

Whose ears of greed more eagerly will listen

To tales that into Satan's regions dipped?

Whose lips disseminate more evil lies

Than theirs, and with a sweeter air of truth?

And *who* can feign more hypocritic sighs,
Or stab your very heart, with less of ruth?

No! there is nothing on this earth that crawls,

That I loathe more than these most evil creatures,

And it may even be well that sometimes falls

A veil, even though of falseness, o'er their features!

WORDS OF WARNING.

(To — AND —, &c.)

EVIL imaginations have ye, filled

With all sad pictures of life's sadder side—

And holding fast by these, are so self-willed

Ye have all other, fairer truths denied!

Ye seize upon some thing of hideous shape,
And place it straight before the world's big eyes—

With your own robes the hateful monster drape,

Then call it *ours*! with jauntiest of lies!

Oh! could ye then construct, ye wretched creatures,

No better thing than *this* to meet men's eyes—

Something less strangely loathsome in its features,

So as to turn suspicion from the wise?

Now, if ye should resume the "tricks of old,"

And seek into our path to bring once more

Those tales of evil—coarsely, falsely bold—
Invented, solely, by vile lips before—

Then, evil-minded spirits, if ye do,

And we are asked to speak, we shall not lie!

But we will make that hour one ye shall rue

Even to that happy hour when ye may die!

THEY ARE OF THOSE.

THEY are of those who, passing down the roads,

Note not the fair flowers, smiling to the day—

They only reckon of the rats and toads,
Disputing in the ditches by the way.

They are of those who, on a lofty height,
See not the light of Heaven—benignly sweet—

See not the beauty, freshness, and the light—

Only the mists—low-lying at their feet.

They are of those who, through a forest straying,

See not the grandeur of that forest's trees—

The graceful, leafy boughs above them swaying,

At each light touch of summer's loving breeze.

They only note that heavy shadows lie

So gloomily upon the ill-grown grass—

And shudder at the low and piteous sigh
Of mournful breezes that amongst it
pass.

They are of those, who, passing through a
city,
Look only on the fog, dust, and turmoil,
Who note its sombre characters with pity,
But not the greatness of its patient toil.

THEIR EYES ARE BLIND.

THEIR eyes are blind!
Nor know they even the failing of their
powers—
They hear the rushing of a stormy wind,
Yet see not that it breaks the autumn
flowers.

Their brains are weak—
Nor greater powers of life can under-
stand—
They neither know the strongholds of the
meek,
Nor yet the *passion of a failing hand!*

Their steps are coarse,
And cannot tread the sweeter paths of
earth—
Their ears are dull, their voices thin, or
hoarse,
Untuned to tenderness, or silver mirth.

Their hearts are cold,
They see the blight of flowers, in summer's
grass,
The lambs that die within the chilly fold,
But they stop not to succour, as they pass.

Their tones are rough,
Devoid of all sweet echoes of the dove—
They call this life a woof of "evil stuff,"
Nor see inwoven the gold threads of
Love!

THEIR EARS ARE DEAF.

EARS that catch not the thunder's under-
note,
Nor yet the warning of the south wind's
sigh,
The last song from the nightingale's tired
throat,
Lamenting that the flowers of spring-
tide die.

Ears that are reached not by the bitter
moan
That echoes through a dark and brood-
ing sky,
Deaf as the adder underneath the stone,
That heareth not the steps that trample
by.

Ears that catch not the tender tones of
love,
Nor yet its weary and heart-broken
sigh—
That care not for the cooing of a dove,
But listen for the vulture's far-heard
cry.

Ears that will hearken to the voice of
hate—
The voice that may be bitter, coarse
and bold—
That only hear the clanging of the gate
That shuts the sinners out into the cold.

Ears that belong not to the *better* life
That yet *may* be, upon this world of
woe;—
Attuned to sounds of grief, of hate, of
strife,
They are not for *our* world, but one
below!

THEIR MINDS ARE DULL.

THEIR minds thou can'st not startle!—I
have known
Those whom the wildest cries could not
appal—
These strike on hearts that seemed as
formed of stone—
Ah! dully on such ears Pain's echoes
fall!

Yet I should shrink to call this state *their*
fault!
For there are minds constructed in such
manner
No lofty thought such minds *can* e'er
exalt;
They are as soldiers—fighting for no
banner!

All things to them are feeble, paltry,
vain—
All time is made up of poor, wasted
hours—

Nothing deserves the trouble and the pain
On which Life spends its energies and
powers!

"Men are incapable of faithful love—
And women just the same," they cry—
Poor creatures!

Oh! nothing great their souls can ever
move,

Or put a noble seal upon their features!

One wonders our Creator took the
trouble

To shape them!—hard, indeed, to under-
stand!

Why did He not their sense and virtue
double,

So as to make them worthier of His
Hand!!

THEIR HEARTS ARE COLD.

THEIR hearts are cold—they know not
what they miss.

'Tis not the passing smile—the faithless
kiss;

'Tis not the glow of some fair summer
day

That storms shall darken ere it pass
away!

It is no picture brush of their's could
paint—

No statue hand of *theirs* could e'er
design!—

It is the light that shall surround a saint,
A something of eternal—holy shine.

Ah! dreams to some—but bright, but idle
dreams—

A vision only of a thing of glory!

To others it is not a thing that *seems*—

It is a faithful and a noble story!

Yes! if a dream, of Heaven itself the
dream!—

Ah—there are those that know, but can-
not tell,

In words that shall befit so rich a theme,
That Love is something stronger than
a spell!

A dream—yes!—but if so, a dream till
death!

A dream of all most lovely, sweet, and
brave—

A breath of joy—but what a glorious
breath!—

That bears, with some, a life beyond the
grave!

A DISCONTENTED SPIRIT.—I.

SHE says there is but darkness on this
earth—

A baser metal all its gold alloys;

Some evil poisons all its seeming worth,
Some meanness all its bravery destroys.

She sees but shadows on her dreary way,
All fruits are poisoned-apples in her
sight,

And always, at the closing of the day,
There falls upon *her* plot of earth a
blight!

To her there is a canker in each flower,
The purest lily even hath a stain,

To her a serpent lurks in every bower,
Grubs in all roots, and mildew on all
grain!

She will predict each noble cause as lost—
That all our winds shall reach us from
the east!

To her the soil seems rarely freed from
frost—

All life but disappointing, at the *least*!

And, strange as it may seem, such always
think

They have, of all on earth, no cause
for fear!

"Those others" stand upon perdition's
brink,

But unto them the race is always clear!

A DISCONTENTED SPIRIT.—II.

BUT who are they

Who look with scorn upon this earthly
land?

Have they no faithful comrades on the
way,

To hold out, in their need, a helping
hand?

Believing not

In warmth and goodness, on life's
chequered plain,

Theirs is a weary, melancholy lot,
In which hopes of *true* happiness are
vain!

Cold winds, alone,
Blow round their chilly forms, as on they
plod—
Green moss but *sometimes* covers the rough
stone—
The only verdure where *their* steps have
trod.

Flowers born with blight,
Fruits that can never ripen—green and
sour—
Grow only in their discontented sight,
Under the skies that grimly o'er them
lower.

Upon the ground
That *some* shall cultivate, ripe fruits
abound!
Upon the soil of *these* poor creatures,
bloom
Only the flowers of some unholy tomb!

COMPARATIVE ENEMIES!

HEARTS have we known that hardly are
more warm,

O Death! than is that ice-bound one of
thine—

And there are forms more evil than *thy*
form,

Eyes that with greater cruelty can shine;

Eyes that with hatred's lurid fire can
glow,

And tones in which the ring of spite is
clear—

Yes! there are human voices many know,
That fill but with antipathy, or—fear!

Thy voice hath a hoarse rattle in its throat,
O Death! like the grim *rubbing* of dry
bones!

Ah! nothing of the nightingale's sweet
note—

Ah! nothing of a lover's tender tones!

Yes, there are voices man yet more needs
hate,

Through which the heart more cruelly
shall bleed,

Ah! *sometimes*, Death, thy warning seems
too late,
Others have been more rapid in their
speed!

For there are enemies far worse than thou,
And forms we hate more than thy
ghastly shape,
That mark with greater bitterness the
brow—
Fiends that not even the fairest shall
escape!

EVIL DEEDS OF—"YES!" AND

"NO!"

AH, there are some, as now too well we
know,
Who spread their evil tales, year after
year,
Each tale increasing like the years, as
though
There was no Heaven to win, no Hell to
fear!

They laugh to think what peace they may
destroy,
And with the *plainest* truth delight to
flirt!

And by ill-chosen terms that they employ,
Not only stainless names but *hearts* they
hurt!

Yes! with no blush upon their brow, or
cheek,

Each fact that they have heard will they
distort,

And shameless slanders of another speak,
As if of *rectitude* they never thought!

Of old, the tongue too prodigal in lies,
'Twas said, would soon be blistered,
sore, or burnt!

A strange, a wild delusion! as the wise,
Or the observant, must have fully
learnt!

Had one in Satan disbelieved, for shame
One could not *now* refuse belief, who
heard

A woman's lips the biggest falsehood
frame,

That *could* be put into a single word.

"No" in the wrong place means a sack of lies—

The foulest blight may bring on home and hearth;
But "yes" is close behind, and often tries
To run as wicked and as cruel a path!

REPTILES!

EVIL and careless in their words, indeed—
Needing much weeding, pruning and deduction!—

Twisting each fact as though a centipede—
Or, is might seem, an octopus, for *suction!*

They wander down a dark and narrow way—

They leave the sun of Truth so far behind

They lose the guiding light of open day,
Nor can again the upward pathway find.

The serpent that has ever tempted, still
May lie concealed beneath your fairest hedge—

May spring from hollows in a sunny hill,
Or in some crevice its vile length may wedge.

Nor can you kill such reptiles, try your best!

You still may, in the strangest way, be foiled—

And if you dare to track one to its nest,
You'll find a hundred others therein coiled!

Yes! evil—careless in their words, indeed—
Needing much weeding, pruning, and deduction!—

Twisting each fact as though a centipede—
Or, it might seem, an octopus, for *suction!*

O THOU VILE TATLER!

(To —.)

O THOU vile tatler!—is *all* conscience lost?—

You — who in falsehood's paths have never paused—

Stay now to think what hath thy folly cost,

What needless, yet *dark* trouble thou hast caused!

Doth *no* strong hand strike fiercely at thy breast

To call thee to account for thy foul lies?—

That knocks and knocks, and gives thy soul no rest,

Till thou, at last, hast opened thy fool's eyes?

Can'st thou go to thy couch with *such* a past,

To throw the shadow of mean things *before,*

And on thy thoughts the bitter burden cast

Of sins of which thou hast so drear a store?

Thou sleepest in security, even now!—

Thy conscience gives to thee no *dagger-prick*—

A hateful brand is burnt into thy brow—
The mists before thee daily grow more thick.

Awaken, sleeper! ere it be too late!

Thine is a fatal, terrible repose—
The rust is covering thy unopened gate—

Awaken! day is nearing to its close!

STERN WORDS.

Go to!

Thou scoffest at all chattels not thine own!
Is nothing sweet save what *thy* hand may do?

Is error only to *thy* path unknown?

Have all thy steps been fragrant, strong, and clean—

Nor ever in the darkness gone astray?
Hast thou in only *stainless* footpaths been,
And never wandered in an evil way?

Hast thou ne'er mocked at *others'* failures—
—thou,

Who treadest yet in tracks that seem so poor!

Hast thou e'er fronted, with a noble brow,
The winds that whistled round a ruined door!

Hast thou fought only in a winning fight
That thou hast been so hard on those that failed?

And have thy deeds been always of the right!

That thou but *sins of others* have bewailed!

If thou indeed hast in thine eyes no beam—

If pride and sin are quite to thee unknown,

Go! "paddle merrily adown the stream,"
And boast that no canoe is like thine own!

THE SLANDERER—OR ACCURSED.

(DEDICATED TO—SEVERAL!)

THERE is no creature that can breathe the air

Of this long-troubled earth, of whom I dare

To prophesy of fates the very worst,
As of a thing by Heaven and man accursed,

As of the vilest gnome to whom our earth
Did ever, in her darkest hour, give birth,
As of the SLANDERER! whose poisoned breath

Will sometimes slay more cruelly than death!

There have been some who thought they might evade

This demoniac sprite—one who has had,
Even from the earliest hour this world was made,

A monarchy so boundless and so sad!
A fiend whose object seems, in each attack,

Remorselessly to fasten on the rack,
Whomever he may envy, hate, or fear,
Or who may greater than himself appear!

These last he hates the most! on whom he fain

Would fasten some reproach—or fatal stain—

For none more envious of the great are known,

More bitter towards all glory not their own—

Towards each and all who, in life's eager races,

Stand forward in our nobler, higher places—

Since one thing to keen eyes is ever plain,
The slanderer is the vainest of the vain!

Oh! think not thou can'st shame him!
He will lie,

Even in the face of Heaven's most peaceful sky!

Even when surrounded by the purest air,
By fruits most wholesome and by flowers most fair!

Yet it were well did *all* his power resist,
Did *all* remember that his lips have kissed,

Not seldom, though they fail to leave their taint—

The pure and holy forehead of a saint!
Yes! most of all the Slanderer will detest
Those whose good labours in the world are blessed—

And least of all the Slanderer can endure
The loved of Heaven—the sinless and the pure!

So ye who walk the "narrow path" below,

Regardless both of heat, of rain, of snow,
Nor fretting that the hour be dark or late,
Be warned! lest ye shall gain the Slanderer's hate!

The Slanderer will not easily forgive
Those fellow creatures, who know how to live

A purer life than his—or, some might say,
Than *hers*—we would that we might answer *nay!*

But ah! both walk the hapless world at times,

Fomenting both its sorrows and its crimes,
Until the hour arrives for both to go,
Away from all their victims—*down below!*

LISTEN!

LISTEN—thou sinner—listen! thou may'st hear

That voice that cannot rest—that voice within—

That voice so small and yet so strongly clear,

Reminding thee of folly, error, sin.

Listen! that voice shall tell thee of the wrong

Done unto one who yet did *thee* no harm—

That voice that *will* be heard, gentle, yet strong,
That thou can'st never "lay" by any charm!

Too late—for thou can'st scarcely *now* regain

The peace that thou hast lost, *that* which shall claim

Regret, while thou shalt live, *that* which shall stain,

Not only now, but evermore, thy name.

The past is buried, yet its evil ghost,
Shall haunt thee, even to thy life's last hour,

Until the vessel nears that far-off coast,
That was to thee a dream—devoid of power!

The rose that thine own unclean steps have pressed

Into the dust, shall bloom for thee no more—

The voices that once warned thee are at rest,

Thine hour to yet awaken them, is o'er!

AN UNCHARITABLE SOUL.

WHAT others spoke of in a tone of praise,
Her pen would mention with a cruel sneer—

'Twas rarely in her dull and stolid days,
They *say*, that she was known to shed a tear!

A taste of evil she would ever give

To all the words and actions of another,
She seemed the very hours of life to live,

To mark the sins of sister or of brother!

At every step impressed upon life's way,

At all their actions, oft at every word,
Even those a little careless, or but gay,
She seemed with bitter jealousy to "gird!"

What seemed to many only done from kindness,

To her soured vision seemed as acts of spite,

She only jeered at others' "colour-blindness,"

Her eyes saw things, she said, in their true light!

It might have been she really was sincere,
And grieved to look upon the ways of men!

One fain would hope so, even when forced to fear

A withered heart went with the caustic pen!

TO —.

AH! you may proudly boast your "sweet" career,

And deem yourself unstained by worldly sin,

And fancy that your view of Heaven is clear,

And think that *you* its grace are sure to win.

'Tis true you have not *murder* done, nor taken

Another's husband for your own, it seems!—

And from your feet the world's vile dust have shaken—

Yet—may your hopes of Heaven be idle dreams!

Have you not spoken falsely—without shame!

And stones cast spitefully at noble men—

Have you not poisoned a poor woman's name—

Ah! *killed a reputation*—now and then?

No! you may not have struck another dead—

But what of angered sob, of burning tear—

What of the calumnies your lips have spread—

What of the lying tale—the murderous sneer

More ways than one hath envy to work ill,
Truly there are malignant hearts that know

A sadder, surer way in which to kill
Than by the keenest dagger's sudden blow!

AN UNSHAKEN FAITH.

I PRAISED my sisters but the other day—*
That class I spoke of, may I always
 love!—

Not the complaining traveller on her way,
 Scowling at every shadow from above—

Not the unpleasant soul who see'th not
 The silver lining of the heaviest cloud—
 Who, discontented ever with her lot,
 Makes her complaints of others coarse
 and loud.

No! not for these shall I give up my
 faith—

Even though a harsh experience may
 have taught
That side concerning which the wise man
 saith,
 "All is not gold that shall as gold be
 bought!"

Because I know some women *strangely*
base,

Whose steps but cheat, whose lips but
burn with lies,
 Who speak their falsehoods with a smiling
 face,
 Whose souls the mildest Christian must
 despise—

Because I have known women *without*
hearts,

Filled with a hot and Pharisaic pride—
So, also, those—who play the noblest
parts,

Within the world that is so broad and
 wide!

YES! THERE ARE WOMEN.

YES! there *are* women hardly safe to
 know,

Would you a life of peace, or comfort,
 live!

Doubtless are "worries" in all paths
 below,

But unto these see you broad pathways
 give!—

Unless for peace and comfort you care
 not!

For each one, of this class, delights to
 find

Some little thing in some poor creature's
 lot,

As food for scandal for an idle mind!

It is an appetite, and one most gross,
 That "groweth" just by what it "feeds
 upon,"

Their acquisition is another's loss,
Their cheeks grow red, as grow another's
 wan!

'Tis better to take warning while you may,
 And if you and your friends would not
 be stung,

Avoid the scandalmonger, night and day,
 Especially *that* one of *specious* tongue!

A woman, some declare, goes to *extremes!*
 Is *demon*, heart and soul, or hardly less,
 With much that curses, little that redeems,
 Or, is an angel, whom all praise and
 bless!

SORTS OF HOMES.—I.

THIS is a home of smiling flowers and
 trees,

Where shall be never a discordant
 sound!

It is a home wherein they "live at ease,"
 And look with scorn upon the world
 around.

The dwelling of the Holy (save the mark!)
 Of whose prosperity all neighbours tell,
 A home where there is nothing sad or
 dark,

Only the "pure" and "righteous"
 therein dwell!

The dwelling of the kindiy and the meek,
 Of those who *never* speak a shrewish
 word!

Where heartless souls shall never entrance
 seek,

Nor hypocritic counsel e'er be heard!

* "Versus a Woman, Pro Women."

Yes! purity and holiness therein,
Have made a permanent and sweet
abode—
Not even the very *ghost*, itself, of sin,
So much as *dares* to flit about the road!

And here they dwell, those of the "holy
mind,"
To sit in judgment on the world's dark
woes,
The sweetest pastime that their souls can
find,
Lasting from sunrise till the evening's
close.

How *good* a life, indeed! how free from
wrong—
Just like an angel's—"pure and un-
defiled"—
It is a home in holy purpose strong,
On which the Peace of Heaven hath
always smiled!

HOME II.

YES! *quite* a home to envy—where men
live,
And women, and their children—all
demure,
And *proper* of behaviour!—where they
give
Good counsel freely from those lips so
"pure!"

Mark you their footsteps! for their very
tread
Hath something in it that, of all,
betrays
Its owner's vanity—lips never said
What steps like *these* proclaim, through
all their days!

Hearken their counsels!—you shall never
hear
Of any with more wondrous wisdom
teeming!—
Full of self-satisfaction—calmly clear—
Rich with the accents of the—righteous—
seeming!

Take you their good advice, for they
assure you
That none *could* ever be so wise as
theirs!

They warn you of all sins that might
allure you,
And bid you shun old Satan's many
snares!

That you may not be *quite* a fool, but know
Some things as well as *they*, never
occurs
To them, it seems!—their words like tor-
rents flow—
Those "counsels" stick to you as very
burrs!

If they would only—just *one* little while—
Turn their attention to their own
"small" vices!
Ah!—by no shift can you to *this* beguile
Their thoughts!—'tis not a duty that
entices!

HOME III.

(FOR NOS. I. AND II. *not* TO VISIT.)

GOD'S Hand is heavy here—and those that
mourn
Dwell under its dark roof in mourning
clad—
Sweet blossoms from their lives seem
rudely torn,
Leaving their lands o'ershadowed—
empty—sad.

The strains of music ring no more—the
voice
Of joy is silent—only that of grief
Is heard—for there are none therein re-
joice,
Either at spring time, or at fall of leaf.

Tears, weary tears, fall down the pallid
cheek—
The heart is wearied by incessant sighs—
The grief is heavier than the lips can
speak,
And veils itself from idle, prying eyes.

Only the hymn, the prayer, or sorrow's
song,
Is sometimes heard to break the silence
there—
The days, if calm, are wearisome and
long,
Even when they touch no limits of
despair.

Not this your home, ye Pharisees—not
this

A home for thee and thine—but to
avoid!

No! not a home for hypocritic kiss—
Peace, by thy very presence, were
destroyed!

TO THE DEMON OF CALUMNY.

I.

THOU imp of mischief, thing of fiendish
birth,

That some of us, alas! have known too
well,

What dost thou here upon the plains of
earth?

From Hell thou camest up—*go back to
Hell!*

O fiend! though often robed in saintly
white—

O devil! some of us too sadly know—

Thou dost indeed belong to realms of
night!

Those realms that stretch out, we are
told, *below!*

Thy touch will breed a canker in the
rose—

The echo of thy footsteps fills with
fears—

Thou hast no pity for thy brother's woes,
Thou hast no pity for thy sister's tears.

Thy hand would poison even an infant's
food,

If such fell to thy purpose to prepare—

Thy touch is as a blight on all things
good—

Thy breath is as a mildew in the air.

The grass will scorch beneath thy evil
tread,

The bird grows silent in its mossy nest,

The fairest lily will its petals shed
If worn *one moment* on thy evil breast.

Thou imp of mischief, thing of fiendish
birth,

That some of us, alas! have known too
well,

What dost thou here, upon the plains of
earth?

From Hell thou camest up—*go back to
Hell!*

TO THE DEMON OF CALUMNY.

II.

THOU fallest as a shadow on his path,
Thou hidest as a canker in his rose,
Thou sittest as a comrade by his hearth,
And yet thou art one of man's deadliest
foes!

Thou art to most an evil worse than death,
A spirit of grim visage, known too well—
Thou art a thing of foetid, loathsome
breath,

Once more—hot from the furnaces of
Hell!

On all things touched by thee remains a
blight,

A something like a foul unwholesome
dew—

On the May blossom, on the lily's white,
The snowdrop's purity, the violet's blue.

Upon the fairest peach is seen thy spot—
On fairest meadow land thy shadow
falls;

Nothing thou sparest—nor the peasant's cot,
The rich man's homestead, nor the
noble's halls.

Shadow and demon foul—for thou art
both—

The pall of death, the infant's tender
birth,

The mother's faithful love, the lover's
troth—

Ah! nothing sparest thou upon this
earth!

TO THE DEMON OF CALUMNY.

III.

ALAS! a blight upon the lily's snow—
A mildew in the rose-leaf's crumpled
fold—

The wise man fresher seeds will quickly
sow,

Yet may not raise the tender plants of old—

For this may not be possible, we own—
That plot is arid where the flowers have
died,

However carefully the seed be sown—
And *then* was morn—*now* is the even-
tide!

Then was it summer—with the busy bees
Out humming, in the gossamer-filled air,
The winds their secrets told amongst the
trees,
The time was happy, all its flowers
were fair.

Dead joys are as lost children; never
more
The lilies bloom when once their frail
stems' break;
They quit the land they made so fair
before,
Their places in the world shall others
take.

It is the plan of Life, it is the plan
Of Heaven—one knows it futile to
repine—
Short and uncertain is the race to man,
To-day is his, to-morrow shall be thine.

Amidst the wars, the tumult, and the din,
We run the ever same brief, heated race,
To die full oft before the post we win,
So to another yield the sought-for place.

TO THE DEMON OF CALUMNY.

IV.

YES! even our violets blight, if thou art
near—
Gone is at once their perfume, sweet and
dear,
Earth's holiest snowdrop, worn upon thy
breast,
Dies, as a felon dies, unwept, unblest.

Yet there are realms that thou shalt never
reach—
There is an ocean, bordered by no beach
For tainted steps like thine to foully
mark—
There is a region neither chill, nor dark;

And there beam eyes that shall not know
thy spite—
And brows too clear for *thy* foul touch to
blight—

And there smile lips that never breathe
thy name,
And there beat hearts thou can'st not
bring to shame.

The holy air of Heaven is not for thee,
The pure of heart thine own shall never
be—

Thou art a fiend to shun and to detest,
Who hast no place in Heaven's eternal
rest.

Go back! to realms from which thy brood
hath sprung,
Where sin is grey and sorrow never young,
And where divine compassion is unknown,
That ghastly palace—only—is thine own.

TO —.

(A CONTEMPTIBLE CHARACTER!)

So! thou did'st stab at us behind our
back!

While holding out thy mean hand with
a smile—

In kindness did'st pretend to watch our
"track,"

Yet wert a bitter enemy the while.

Yes! dared to proffer counsel as a *friend*!
Disguising skilfully thou wert a foe—
Thou had'st the meanness even to pre-
tend,

Thy hand was one to *help*, as now we
know!

Yes! thou did'st speak *abominable* lies,
And spread thy whispers of the falsest
things,

Thou had'st a very jaundice in thine eyes,
Thy unclean hands were full of poison-
stings.

Thou wert so deadly cold—thou wert so
sly,

Thy hate with no redeeming feeling
mixed,

And in most shameless manner would'st
thou try

Some stab to give, where'er that hate
was fixed!

Thou would'st declare that wholesome
skins had sores,

Apply to healthy spots thy vicious
blisters—

And fetch ditch-water to clean spotless
floors,
And hate, above all things, thy nobler
sisters!

An open foe we never yet have dreaded—
Only a soul where hate and spite are
wedded—
Had'st thou been *open* we had felt, far
less
This scorn of thee no words can now
express!

A CERTAIN CLASS OF CORRESPONDENTS!

TRULY could *no* epistles ever match,
The pile that *we* received, in certain
days!
And through them all you could not fail
to catch
An echo of the wildest *self appraisal*

And they seemed chiefly written just to
show,
The paths *you* trod were really "of the
beast!"
Yet scarce the paths you *really* trod, you
know,
But then, you see, *that* mattered not the
least!

"Pause and reflect—pause and your steps
retrace—
Experience may be dearly—yet well-
bought!
Or we shall live to see you but disgrace
Those high, those lofty lessons *we* have
taught!"

"Pause and reflect—ere yet it be too late,
Those ways of yours but lead to shame
and sin!
But paths of *ours* are always 'pure' and
straight,
And following these, *be certain* Heaven
you win!"

"Follow *our* rules—for we, you see, know
all
The ways, the thoughts, the doings of
the blest—
Do as *we* do and you will never fall
Into the evil paths of *all the rest!*"

So ran these many letters, just to show
The paths *you* trod were just—*paths of
the beast!*
Yet scarce the paths you *really* trod, you
know,
But then, you see, *that* mattered not
the least!

ONE OF A "CERTAIN CLASS" OF CORRESPONDENTS!

No one could stranger letters ever write,
Or really write them in a greater
rage—
Urged by a demon—nothing less—of
spite,
Her bitter pen flew swiftly o'er the
page.

I think she never read them o'er
again—
She was not one of such a "feeble"
kind!
She wrote with *full intent* of giving pain,
To make you "bless" that "piece" of
her strong mind!

It was her DUTY to *reproach*;—to *scold*
Was never the appropriate word to
use!—
But it was right that truth were sometimes
told—
Her plan was to rebuke — and *not*
abuse! !

So souls deceive themselves!—seeing each
note
Brought scoldings and reproaches—both
alike;
And lies stuck never in her practised
throat,
And fear of shame *her* mind would
never strike!

You learnt—the one idea that filled that
"mind"
Was this—that none except herself could
find
Right ways to Heaven!—only the few who
trod
In *her* "pure" steps could take the
path to God!

"REJECTED ADDRESSES!"

(To MRS. —.)

"You would be friends again—yet *you*
had broken,
Yourself, the close ties of the days passed
o'er;
And *your* lips are the harsh lips that have
spoken
The words that we may pardon, but—
no more!"

"All who would be forgiven must forgive
Even those that stab them—both by
word and deed;
Yet none a healthy live on earth can
live
Whose unhealed wounds are often forced
to bleed."

"It is not well that we again should
meet—
No thought of thee could ever now be
dear;
And memories that can never now be
sweet,
Are bitterly recalled when thou art
near."

"Not for the hour of mercy did'st thou
wait
To strike—or struck the *strong*, but one
laid low—
One who was weakened by the blows of
Fate,
Who suffered, yet might not return the
blow."

"No! thou can'st not recall the bitter
part
That thou hast played, though thou
may'st know regret—
But even the most forgiving, human heart
Some hellish wrongs shall not, on earth,
forget."

"Though anger's fire may—sometime—
pass away,
Such memories ever shall be full of
pain;
And in the calm rest of a later day,
I would they slept, nor ever woke
again!"

A PITY 'TIS—'TIS PITY!

"A PITY 'tis—you don't live as *we* live!"
We once heard a *strong* Pharisee de-
clare—

"So much of peace and comfort it would
give,
Our outlook is so ever *pure* and fair!

"We never do a foolish thing,' you
see,
And always 'say a wise one'—even as
now!

How good and happy *you* might also be,
As one of us—for *we* could teach you
how!

"Yes! *how* to do all things fair Heaven to
win—

Whose door shall be to *others* a closed
door!

For *we* know *all* the paths of shame and
sin—

How Satan to o'ercome and—something
more!

"Yes! *we* know how the world to please,
as well"—

But here we stopped the Pharisee, and
said—

"Ha! we don't think, the sober truth to
tell,

'Twould suit us *quite*, in steps of *yours*
to tread!

"No! we would rather *not*—if you don't
mind—

Tread in those oily steps that are your
own—

And *did* we try, we fancy, friend, you'd
find

That we, at every step we took, should
—GROAN!"

A CERTAIN SET.

THEY have such strong and educated
brains!

They take such trouble and they spare
no pains

To sit as censors on the works of others—
To point out all the failures of their
brothers.

No better judges than themselves *could*
sit,
To value put on wisdom, sense, and wit—
With most unprejudiced, clear-sighted eyes,
None are so educated—none so wise!

There is no question that they find too
"burning!"
What cannot be unravelled by their learn-
ing!
There is no matter that can be too great
For *them* to give to it its proper weight!

Love! love! to the worn brow and the
grey hair
Of such is but a subject for despair—
And poetry is to their souls unknown—
A light that never on their paths hath
shone.

So, with their pallid and short-sighted
eyes,
They posture as the learned and the wise—
And measure out both blame and praise—
yet they
Live in the shade of but a *twilight* day!

THE "SPOTTED TONGUE."

SEE that the "spotted tongue" may never
come
Within the very reach of thine own
door—
Or it will throw that shadow o'er thy
home,
That makes it, to the *simple*, fair no
more!

That tongue will lie, and then its lies
repeat—
It is its "nature to," old Watts would
say!
Oh! any chance for this it deems most
sweet,
One but an idiot would let slip away!

That tongue on all things leaves a bitter
stain,
And all its touches henceforth seem to
blight—
'Tis worse—yes! worse than useless to
"explain"—
Say what thou wilt, thy words are
never right!

This is a happy fact! dispute it not!
Or thou wilt suffer for it, in due time—
On everything "that tongue" will leave
its "spot"—
Each virtue turn into a seeming crime!

'Tis even like a vicious weather-vane—
That evermore to evil quarters veers—
And who may of its hateful work com-
plain,
Gains nothing!—*better live with well-
corked ears!*

TO —.

I KNOW your meanness *well*—no one could
levy,
Much toll of love on *you* when storms were
heavy—
'Tis only when no clouds are in the air,
That you pretend once more to "speak us
fair!"

I know you but too well, once more I
say—
I walk not as a novice in *this* day!
My troubles on life's seas have been right
sore,
But now I reach the peaceful land once
more.

And I would not thy ill-trimmed vessel
came,
With what I *know* must be a load of
shame,
Into the coves of late but warm sunshine,
That, by the grace of Heaven, at last are
mine.

Here is there peace and stillness, but not
long
Would this remain, came but *thy* foot-
steps near—
Steps that are coarsely mixed of weak
and strong,
But—*weaker* ones outnumber much, we
fear.

No! they shall come not where is rest and
balm—
No! they shall come not where the skies
are clear—
No! they shall come not where the wind
is calm,
And music only, echoes on mine ear!

LESSONS OF EARTH.

As blows the east wind tender things will
perish—

The young fawns shiver on the frosted
grass—

But suffering spirits some will scorn, not
cherish—

And mock them, as on their sad way
they pass.

The oak repels the raging northern blast,
And lifts its branches nearer to the sky
As the mad tempest angrily sweeps past,
But lilies, pale and tender, droop and
die.

The eagle, fearless of the sportsman, soars
To lofty heights, away from danger's
reach—

The wood-dove, lost upon the rock-bound
shores,
Dies in the cold upon the treeless beach.

The glowing rose, placed in the blighting
shade,

Missing the sunlight, slowly fades away—
Siberian crab-trees, of no storm afraid,
Bloom through the chill of an Icelandic
day.

And if the autumn shadows fall apace,
The apple withers, in the early frost—
The later plum will lose its ripening
grace,
And falling in the shrivelled grass be
lost.

There are those that but praise the
favoured paths,

Those that are shadowed scornfully pass
by—

They visit not bereavement's mournful
hearths,

Nor care they that the sad and suffer-
ing die.

FEAR OF THE WORLD!

THE World! the World! 'tis for the World
alone,

They would be friends—they know that
some could tell

Of hearts that were as made of hardest
stone,
Of buckets that found *theirs* an empty
well!

The World! the World! they care what it
will say,

Beyond all humble praise of simple
hearts—

Their dread lest it should proclaim that
they,

Have played the meanest, most un-
worthy parts!

Affection—no! not for *affection* they
Would figure now—of friends the *very*
dear!

But what the World shall of its conduct
say,

Whose voice—*though they deny it*—they
so fear!

Affection shows its depth in hours of
trouble,

And by the death-bed tenderly will
stay—

Not only figures as so mean a bubble,
The first storm bursts it and it
floats away.

Go back, ye, *to the World*, who have done
this!

Show not to Honour thy mean, *craven*
face—

Offer not here thy hypocritic kiss,
Nor think it *ever* shall the Past erase!

AN OLD AND EVERYDAY
STORY.

"When his mother taunted him with her 'maintaining his wife,' he renounced the allowance at once and for ever!" The allowance was one that a mother, and widow had given her overworked son whose "health had been suffering"—and whose "life was a misery to him"—from "overwork!" See *Times*, Dec. 13, 1883.

O JEALOUS mothers! — wherefore do ye
hate,

With such fierce hate, a loved and
loving wife?

Why is that bitter jealousy so great—

Fomenting, evermore, distress and
strife?

For, if the son the law divine obeys—
And holds his wife as *one with him*—the
more

The mother turns against that wife, her
days

To fill with accusations—sharp and sore!

Was she not first? or felt she *should* have
been,

Beyond all question, in *her* husband's
graces!

Why, then, *this* wife and husband come
between?

Ah, *circumstances*—see you—*alter cases*!

There is in human life enough of trouble—
More than enough, methinks, that any
mother

Needs seek the dreary shadows to re-
double,

Then throw the blame of "discord" on
another!

Ah! the mean feeling—*vanity*, alone,
Is at the root of all such jealous craze—
Once first, *some* mothers cannot bear to
own,

They needs come second, both for love
and praise.

I've known a mother who, the while she
claimed,

All love compared to hers was as a
vain,

A weak, a feeble thing—was not ashamed,
To speak of her *own* mother with dis-
dain.

THE MEAN FAITH OF THE PHARISEES.

THEY think it strange because one cannot
weep

As an o'erpraised life shall draw near
its close—

Nor paltry records of its small deeds keep,
Its selfish pleasures, its ignoble woes.

Tears have we wept—ah! tears of burning
heat,

To note a life of earth's both sad and
brief—

That with a mind unruffled, patient,
sweet,

Bore bravely a sad weight of pain and
grief.

One sighs to note the withering of the rose,
Killed in the wood before the summer's
close—

The lambs that lie untended in the
fold—

The unfledged birds that perish through
the cold.

But one could weep but hypocritic tears,
Who wept o'er one who, full of peevish
years,

Hath passed from all earth's many vexing
ways,

To fulsome chanting of untruthful praise.

God knows that if we grieve for such as
these,

It is in pity for the blinded eyes,
The mean faith of their friends, the
Pharisees,

Who claim for such the temples of the
skies!

CONCLUSION.

(SO RUNS THE WORLD AWAY!)

So runs the world away.

The Pharisee—the ancient would-be saint,
Still fills our later skies with vain com-
plaint—

And stands in sight of men to loudly pray.

So runs the world away.

Old songs still in the breast of Nature sleep—
Earth her old types determines still to
keep—

Nor yet hath used up all her ancient clay.

So runs the world away.

The snake still enters into Paradise,
And Love yet wages her old wars with
vice,

And mortals into evil paths shall stray.

So runs the world away.

And love repeats all ancient forms of
crimes,

Some say is evil as in former times,
Nor on her course for pity's sake will
stay.

So runs the world away.

And who shall tell for what long stretch
of years

She still may weep the same hot floods of
tears,

And chant the songs—"For ever and a
day!"

THE ANGEL'S VISIT, SONGS OF HEROES, POEMS OF PRAYER AND SORROW, ETC.

INTRODUCTORY VERSES.—I.

IN THE WATCHES OF THE NIGHT.

AH! bitter watches of the night are
those
Through which we mark some dear life
ebb away!—
And as we sadly muse, or weep, or
pray,
Each moment brings us nearer to its close.

We look out, sometimes, on the outer
scene,
And see the moonlight shining on the
grass—
And count the dreary hours through
which we pass,
And seem forgetful of what life hath
been—

For so unlike *our* life the present seems,
Even so unlike our former selves we
feel,
This hour is so mysterious and unreal,
Our breath is as the breath of frightful
dreams.

By Death's own shadow our sad hearts
are filled—
'Tis death we seek to ward off, with wild
hands
Of dread, while drifting near to unknown
lands,
And by the whisper of strange voices
thrilled:—

The feeling of Life's painful melancholy,
The sadness of the lessons it shall
teach,
Oppress us oft beyond all human speech,
Even though we deem the lesson may be
holy;

The certainty that man may not control
His future life, whate'er may be his
pride—

Despite himself, not wholly cast aside
The strange, mysterious promptings of
his soul;

That Life is even as a spark of Light,
One man shall not create, not yet
destroy—

A flame that burns in sorrow, or in
joy—
NOT to be quenched in Everlasting Night!

INTRODUCTORY VERSES.—II.

THE UNEXPECTED PRESENCE.

*("He cometh in the hour that no man
knows.")*

HE cometh in the hour that no man
knows,

He giveth us no caution and no choice,
He layeth his cold hands on our fair rose,
Ere we have heard his footsteps, or his
voice.

Sweet dreams have we of coming summer-
time,

Fair hopes of all the joy that life
bestows—

He chooses his own season—country—
clime—

To strike us down with his unlooked-for
blows.

What unto him shall be that life-long
plan—

That dream of love, of triumph, of
delight!

What careth he for the proud hopes of
man—

*He cometh in the unwatched hour of
night!*

The flowers that we have tended with such
care,
Shall blossom not to gladden our fond
eyes—
'Tis not for us to see that tree is fair,
That we have planted under our own
skies.

The love so fondly treasured in our hearts
We cannot save from unexpected fate—
Death spareth none with his unerring
darts,
We—only—are left here to weep and
wait!

THE ANGEL'S VISIT.

THERE is a land where Heaven still reigns
supreme—
Of beauty far beyond the poet's dream—
A land by angels, only, called their own—
A land where sin and death are all un-
known—

A land whereon there is a glorious light—
A radiance far more exquisitely bright
Than tender moonlight, yet as sunlight
clear,
A glow that is not of our sadder sphere.

There is a land wherein the flower's sweet
bloom
Knows nothing of the north wind's voice
of doom,
Where roses blossom of a glorious dye,
Where fruits, that perish, sadden not the
eye—

Where there is neither blighting snow, nor
hail,
Nor wild destruction, with its hopeless
wail,
Nor burning Simoom, with its scorching
breath,
Nor vivid Lightning—messenger of Death.

There is a land where sorrow shall not
reign,
Where foul Disease, with its unfathomed
pain,
Shall never more torment—until we sigh
To lay the hopeless burden down—and
die—

Where riches perish not, nor falsehoods
blight—
Where Folly is not monarch—Power,
Right—
Where Wisdom dare not raise herself,
above,
In infamy of pride—the God of Love!

O Land!—whereon the bright sun never
sets—
Land where Humanity—with endless frets,
And tears, and mournings for her hapless
lot,
Into its holy precincts enters not—

O Land!—where flow no longer hopeless
tears,
Throughout a ceaseless round of weary
years—
Where eyes look brilliant with an endless
joy—
Where misery and guilt no more destroy—

O glorious home! of liberty—of peace—
Where the sweet songs of Love shall
never cease,
Where treachery's smart, the sufferer's an-
guished moan,
And hatred's onslaught vile, are all un-
known—

Haven of rest more pure than purest
snow,
There—shall be never taint of human woe,
But there shall be that holy calm within,
That tells us of enfranchisement from sin!

And yet—in the fair robing of a saint,
Once dwelt a spirit there whose soul was
faint
With yearning, even to sinfulness, to know
The secrets of the darker world below!

She sighed to see that vale of mortal
years,
To read the fatal knowledge of the tears,
The restless griefs—the worm that never
dies—
The bitter storms of Earth's tempestuous
skies.

And listening once, as on its ceaseless
round
The world went by, she caught a plaintive
sound,

That rose from one of Earth's less happy
spheres,
A sound scarce suited to celestial ears!

"Ah! fertile valley—why art thou so sad!
Beloved by Heaven, by Nature richly
clad—

Ye meadows of the lily and the rose!—
Ye forests where the noble oak tree
grows!

"Thou hast, O Earth! such plains of
golden corn—

Laughing and waving in the summer
morn!

Glad apple-trees that blossom on the
plains—

And blushing plums, and grapes of purple
stains—

"Thou hast such babbling of thy crystal
brooks,

Such ceaseless cawing of thy busy rooks,
Such songs of birds—such humming of
the bees—

Such myriad sounds, as sweet and pure
as these!"—

For—even at that peaceful hour, are eyes
That watch the sunset's glowing rays
decrease,

Then slowly vanish—in whose depth there
lies

Far more of human anger than of peace!

Their gaze upon a distant home is bent,
A fair and ancient homestead — softly
grey—

To which the hues of summer sunset lent
A generous glory ere they passed away!

The brow was dark, as with a heavy
weight,

And on it seemed a dreary line of scorn,
The outcome of some bitter thought of
hate—

Her teeth were firmly set—her lips were
drawn—

And yet—how lovely, placid, calmly still
That home, on which was fixed her
darkening gaze!

How grandly on the summit of the hill
It stood beneath the sunset's lurid
rays!

Now, in that proud and stately structure,
dwelt

A widow, with a gentle girl alone,
For whom the heart of that fair gazer felt
As cruel a hate as human breast hath
known.

"That girl! that pale-eyed girl! would
she were dead!

Or *anywhere!* so out of sight and
sound!"

And fiercely, bitterly, the words were said,
With knitted brow, with white teeth
sharply ground!

"What *could* he see, in that small, pasty
face!

A thousand lovelier ones are — any-
where!

Yes! *anywhere!* — she hath, I vow, no
trace

Of beauty—she is neither dark nor fair!

"And he! now he is false I hate far
more—

Yea, with far stronger and more bitter
hate—

Those eyes I thought so beautiful before—
That brow I deemed bespoke a soul so
great.

"Would — *would* that he had ne'er re-
turned again

To bring this bitter conflict in his
path—

Would he had died upon the battle plain,
Forgot — forgetting — even his native
hearth!"

"Ah!" sighed the angel, then—"if thou
art fair,

O Earth! what grief, what darkness of
despair,

What misery in thy sweetest bowers may
dwell—

What bitterness thy mortals' breasts may
swell!—

"Thou art so beautiful and yet so drear!
Oh! sad, indeed, are ye—the dwellers
here!"

And—lifting up her eyes from Earth's sad
plain—

"Ah! Heaven! receive me in thine arms
again!"

YET—

A DARING REMONSTRANCE.

AND yet—if thou wert now upon our earth,

So we dared speak to thee—yea! face to face—

O angel! I might tell of mortal worth—
Of souls whereon shall evil leave no trace!

Aye, I could sing of brave, unselfish deeds—

Of minds that can ignore their own deep pains—

And of the heart that but for others bleeds—

The soul that fights not for its own poor gains.

Therefore, all homage gladly do I render,
If in but feeble words, to noble souls—
Ere singing lays more pitiful and tender,
Of those that seek Heaven's yet more lofty goals.

SONGS OF HEROES.—I.*

GORDON (TOO LATE).—I.

PROCRASTINATION! So our hero fell!
And England, clothed in sackcloth, rings his knell!

More fatal harm upon this earth is wrought

By feeble steps than by men's rasher deeds,

And harrowed by the lessons we are taught
Each heart for England's noble soldier bleeds.

Procrastination! So our hero fell!
And England, clothed in sackcloth, rings his knell!

He, fearless, risked his life, and we—
we waited

For some new meteor to dispel the gloom,

And he who thought all things in life are fated,
Strong in his faith went onwards to his doom!

Procrastination! So our hero fell!
And England, clothed in sackcloth, rings his knell!

What say the bitter cynics of our days—
Are there no heroes and no martyrs now?

Will they refuse our sainted Gordon praise,

Nor crown with monumental wreath his brow?

Procrastination! So our hero fell!
And England, clothed in sackcloth, rings his knell!

Go! lay the garland on his tomb, with tears—

Enrol his lofty name with England's great—

One to be honoured through all future years,

But one, alas! we honour now—*too late!*†

SONGS OF HEROES.—II.

GORDON.—II.

No Pharisee was here—for ever prating
Of others' failures, others' errors—
crimes—

But Duty found our hero ever waiting
To do her bidding, at her own stern times.

No Pharisee was here—whose oily hours
Were given to show he trod a holier way

Than others trod—rather he used his powers

To do what urgent task before him lay.

His life was one of action—calm and strong—

He followed Duty to Death's gloomy gate:

* The following five pieces are of more recent date than most of the preceding.

† See page 56.

And men shall chant for him a grateful
song,
Even while they grieve o'er his untimely
fate.

A hero—not a grumbler, he—whose eyes
Saw not the emptiness of life alone—
But calm, unboastful, and not *meanly*
wise,
In him we part with one of England's
own!

Go! place we flowers upon his honoured
grave,
And let our grief be rather deep than
loud—
There lies the hero—sleeping with the
brave—
One of whom England shall be ever
proud!

SONGS OF HEROES.—III.

A PROMPT HERO.

When last year some one expressed a doubt as
to whether Stewart would arrive at Suakim in
time—"Time!" said Lord Wolseley, "Stewart will
be in time if he has to put to sea in nothing better
than a cockle boat!"—*Times*, Feb. 21st, 1885.

THESE noble qualities that men possess,
The mean of earth in times of peace
forget—
Forget!—still is it scarce a shame the
less—
Earth was, of old, and is — ungrateful
yet!

We mock at our strong souls in calmer
times,
Pass o'er the brave deeds that their
brows have crowned,
Hold up to scorn their faults, point out
their crimes,
And by mean records hedge their lives
around.

Yes! lightly in the days of peace we
name
The fearless wars that men for us have
waged;

Or even read their former deeds with
blame—
Only in history are they briefly pagéd.

Yet when they die for us, in noble fight,
We pay them, doubtless, plenty of cheap
praise—
Profess to keep their fame in reverent
sight,
Speak of them as the heroes of our
days!

Ungrateful world! in safety do we tread
Our lands that are protected by the
brave,
While we forget our silent, sleeping dead,
And let the weeds hide each neglected
grave!

SONGS OF HEROES.—IV.

TO A FALLEN HERO.

SLEEP—oh! thou hero, sleep!—
Far from thy resting-place are shed our
tears;
Yet records of thy glorious fate will keep
Through the dull march of all the
coming years!

Sleep—oh! thou hero, sleep!
Thou wert one of a fearless, glorious
band;
And we, who o'er our bitter loss may
weep,
Know not thy rest in an unfriendly land!

Sleep—oh! thou hero, sleep!
Although thy grave no English flowers
may grace,
For thee our grief is lasting—sad and
deep,
And follows even to that *far* distant
place.

Sleep—oh! thou hero, sleep!
Yes! o'er that grave no native flowers
shall bloom,
No ivy round thy monument shall creep—
No faded rose leaves fall upon thy
tomb.

Sleep—oh! thou hero, sleep!

In History shall thy records be; and
thou

In the far future thy reward shalt reap,
As Fame with glory crowns thy marble
brow!

A REBUKE—

TO A LATE ASPERSER OF HUMANITY.

(To him who declared the statement that a 'brave,
chivalrous man was almost unknown' in our time to
be "a reproach well deserved!")

CAN ye not here the brave behold, O ye
Who named him as one almost now
"unknown!"

Learn thou a nobler lesson—learn to see
The strong injustice of thy bitter moan!

But lately did'st thou seek the judgment
seat,

Proclaiming to whoso might hear on
earth,

That few, if any, walked with cleanly
feet,

Or creatures, were of courage, strength,
or worth!

Go! reckless judge, and never let again
That foolish voice an earthly hearing
claim;

Gather the thistles on thine own poor
plain,

And go thy ways in silence and in
shame!

POEMS OF PRAYER AND SORROW.

CHRISTIAN SORROW.

THROUGH the worn paths of many weary
feet,

One followed patiently a sinless way,
Her form was frail, her brow was calm
and sweet,

The eyes, that outward looked, were
soft and grey.

"I know not if my heart shall faint," she
said,

"In truth, I am full weary of the toil—

The heavy storms that break above my
head,
The wounding flint-stones and dishonour-
ing soil.

"Yet, oh! I must not faint if I would
win

The golden prize, yet far beyond my
reach;

To shun temptation and to conquer sin—
These are the lessons I must learn, and
teach.

"Sweet Patience! keep, I pray thee, by
my side,

Although the way be wearisome and
long;

Let neither feebleness, revolt, nor pride
Teach me to falter in my purpose
strong.

"The light yet glimmers on the earth
awhile,

The goal I seek is nearly now in sight,
Ah! let me reach it ere its glowing smile

Fades in the chill and darkness of the
night!"

A PRAYER TO DEATH.

I LOOKED into her gentle face—and
there

I read the doom of all of Earth's most
fair,

The doom of Death—and yet could recog-
nise

Neither a glance of terror nor surprise.

"What art thou unto me!" she softly
said,

"O Death! grim phantom men so madly
dread!

Only a prayed-for friend and I would
fain,

This time, at least, I shall not pray in
vain!

"Hast thou not robbed me of my fairest
flowers,

And lain in wait for me these many hours?
I know thee well, as Earth's unfailing law,

I have no terror of thee, no, nor awe!

"I prayed to thee so oft, as thou must know,
Through many years of bitter grief; and
though
Thy presence often neared my most beloved,
By *my* appeal thou hast been yet unmoved!

"O Death! thou can'st be hard indeed,
and rob
Our fairest gardens, even with no throb
Of sweet compassion—nay, there is no touch
Of pity in thy cruel and sudden clutch!

"O Death! thou shalt not mock me with
a dream—
And yet, through thy gaunt skeleton, I seem
To see a face—ah! once a face how dear!
Now far away and dim—and now—how near!

"I see again the eyes once softly bright,
Now shining as with Love's divinest light;
I see the soft lips parted, as though
Death
Stayed not the passing of her fragrant
breath.

"Alas! the shadows of the night are deep—
I hear the echoes now of those that weep—
But sweeter, clearer is the voice that prays
For the averted doom of earthly days."

"Pray not! weep not! our hours are hours
of woe—
Pray not for me, for I—I fain would go!
Nay! hold me not, my friend! my days
are o'er;
Now let me join the loved that march
before.

"Pray, rather, I may find the realms that
spread
Their strange, mysterious shadows o'er our
dead—
That in departing into newer day,
I may not loiter on mine unknown way!"

DEATH—THE REAPER.

A LESSON OF LIFE.

THOU art a reaper—with the strong, cruel
hand!

Thou hast a cold, stern eye, a freezing
breath;

Thou sparest nothing, nor on sea, nor
land,

Neither the aged, nor the young—O
Death!

The scarlet poppy that uplifts its head
Above the many weeds that compass
round,

Thou treadest down with an unsparing
tread,

While scattering its bright petals on the
ground.

Thou graspest with fierce grasp the ripen-
ing corn—

For all the plants that grow thou
claimest thine—

And with each yielding stalk is roughly
torn

The strongest knot-weed and the frail
wheat-bine.

The cheerful eyebright, gaily looking up,
The warm smile of the summer's sun
to greet,

The strong ranunculus, with its shining
cup,

Thou tramplest underneath thy bony
feet!

Thou art a reaper—with the strong, cruel
hand!

Thou hast a cold, stern eye, a freezing
breath;

Thou sparest nothing, nor on sea, nor
land,

Neither the aged, nor the young—O
Death!

THE SILENT PRESENCE.

HE stands beneath the lowly peasant eaves,
In royal halls a fatal memory leaves;
O'er his own footprints daintily he strews
Our summer blossoms of the fairest hues.

Under the smiling surface of the waves
He caverns out a thousand dreary graves—
Only the sad and sullen waters know,
Besides himself, the secrets veiled below!

He steals into the lover's happy bowers,
He gathers ruthlessly his fairest flowers;
Neither for pity, nor for prayer, he stays—
But on the sweetest his cold finger lays.

So with cruel, indiscriminating hand
He gathers in the choicest of the land;
And men have known him bow the noblest
head,
Almost ere any heard his stealthy tread!

His lips are silent and his eyes are hol-
low—
Truly we hear not the light steps that
follow,
And track us to the wildest solitude,
With stern persistence none shall here
elude!

There is no spot on earth where man
shall hide,
But he may find Death waiting by his
side—
We lift our hands as to ward off his blow,
He waits in silence, and *we*—rest below!

IT IS PLEASANT TO DIE.—I.

"It is pleasant to die," said a fair, young
girl,
"When the sun in the heavens is clear
and high,
When the leaves in the forest gently curl,
And the rooks fly homeward across the
sky.

"It is pleasant to die when the earth is
fair,
And the flowers smell sweet to the
sighing breeze,
When the swallows flit through the even-
ing air,
Or the rooks to their nests in the old
elm trees.

"It is pleasant to die when the fruits are
ripe,
And the filberts hardening in their shells,

And the pears look grey, with a broad
red stripe,
And the bees are filling their waxen
cells;

"When the corn of the fields is garnered
in,
And the roots laid by for the winter's
store;
And the harvest reapers' merry din
Is heard in the chilling air no more.

"Ah! yes, it is pleasant then to die,
As the beetle's hum goes softly past,
To fade away with the sunset sky,
And rest in the calm of night at
last!"

IT IS PLEASANT TO DIE.—II.

"It is pleasant to die," said a weary
one,
"In the evening's silent hours of rest,
At the sinking down of a stormy sun,
In the mists and the shadows of the
West.

"It is pleasant to die when the clouds are
still,
And the weary winds are gone to sleep,
And the shades are purple upon the hill,
And the waves are calm on the mighty
deep.

"It is pleasant to die, as the flowers lie
dead,
With the dried stalks only left
behind,
When the leaves of the roses all are shed,
And the lily droops in the bitter wind.

"It is pleasant to die when the cheerful
song
Of the mavis is no longer heard;
When the twilight hours are calm and
long,
And only the leaves are lightly stirred;

"When the heavens are clear and the
earth is grey,
And the sounds of the tired world slowly
cease—
It is pleasant to die with the dying day,
In the silence and calm to rest in peace."

IT IS PLEASANT TO DIE.—III.

It is pleasant to die in the roar of
storms—

When the hill sides sparkle with rushing
floods,
And the thunder clouds, with their giant
forms,
Are hanging low o'er the moaning
woods.

It is pleasant to die, with the lightning's
glare
On the plains of earth, on the foaming
seas;
With the crash of tempests in the air,
And the moan and wail of the forest
trees.

It is pleasant to die, as the stars shine
out
Through the lowering clouds of the mid-
night hours;
When the bats and the night-birds flit
about
Round the gloomy pines or the tall
church towers.

It is pleasant to die, when the earth is
sad,
And sorrow and pain have wrung the
breast,
And we look to heaven, and our hearts
are glad
That we go to a realm of calm and rest.

It is pleasant to die, when those we
loved
Have passed from the earth where *we*
remain—
From the home that was theirs, of old,
have moved
To a realm of no more grief and pain!

NO MORE!

HE set his face to the storms of Life,
He was armed and in eager mood for
strife,
And his breast was bright with the steel's
cold sheen,
And his step was gay and his glance was
keen—

But ah! when the day and the fight
were o'er,
He returned to the home he had loved
—no more!

For the path was steep that before him
lay,
And the sharp flint-stones bestrewed his
way!
And the road was long and the road was
wide,
And the reeds grew thick by the river-
side—
And so, when the day and the fight
were o'er,
He returned to the home he had loved
—no more!

Yet, had he hoped for the day when he
Once more in that home of old might be!
But the hope and the dream alike were
vain,
There are few that shall live in the past
again—
And so, when the way and the fight
were o'er,
He returned to the home he had loved
—no more!

And had he, indeed, his steps retraced,
He had found what to him had been a
waste;
He had felt that the hopes of life had
fled,
For the love of his early youth was dead!—
And so it was well, when the fight was
o'er,
That he sought the home of the past—
no more!

A FAITHFUL REMEMBRANCE.

"I DO not fear to die," she softly sighed,
As I sat, sad and musing, by her side—
"I have no dread of Death's unerring
blow,
It is the will of Heaven, full well I
know.

"I have no dread of Death—I only fear
The blow for some, so young—for some
most dear—
For them it pains me"—as she ceased to
speak,
A tear fell slowly down her sunken cheek.

"I do not fear to die," once more she said,
And on the pillow turned her weary head—

"For there are some in Heaven I sigh to meet,
Some who my coming home will gladly greet;

"I have no dread of Death, yet sigh to leave
The loved behind me, they who stay to grieve—

For them," she added, with her gentle smile,
"I fain would linger here—some little while."

"I, also, fear not Death, yet fain would stay
On earth for those I love—I only pray,"
I said, "to linger by their path—no more—

The days of earth are bitter and soon o'er.

"One soon will be with thee, dear friend"
—I wept—

"Who as an infant on my bosom slept—" *

* * * * *

Ah! like the voice of a far-sounding knell,
Return the echoes of that sad farewell! †

TO A LOVED AND LOST FRIEND. ‡

(C. F.)

O FRIEND of past years! thou art peacefully lying
Near kindred and friends in a last home of peace—

While the boughs of the fir trees are over thee sighing,

And where the sweet songs of the birds rarely cease.

How often the thought of our past love returns—

Of steps that trod only in calm, gentle ways;

And a sketch by thy pen, or thy pencil, still earns

A sigh, a sad sigh, for our friendship's past days.

That pencil, so faithful, drew many a scene

Of Erin's wild brushwood, or water-logged moor—

By them I could trace where thy foot-steps had been,

In that youth that returns on this earth never more.

Ah! never, in our long, true friendship, a trace

Of anger, or haste, o'er thy calm features passed—

And the sweet, gentle smile rested still on thy face, §

In the hours when thy sky was so sad and o'ercast

Thy mansion seemed always of peace, we all thought—

Its duties were never neglected by thee—
And oh! each wise lesson thy good life hath taught,

Shall ever most fondly be treasured by me!

THE GRAVES OF FOUR BROTHERS.

THE FOURTH.

FAR from our land my fourth loved brother sleeps, ¶

Where, o'er tall blades of strong New Zealand grass,

The long, dark shadow of the palm-tree creeps,

As the slow hours of day and evening pass.

So far apart! and yet there is a land
Where all may gather, from the farthest spot,

And meet once more together, hand in hand,

With woe and grief and pain remembered not!

* Alas! a terribly true presentiment!

† This interview with a beloved dying friend (Mrs. Herbert Fordham), as well as the *exact spirit* and words, if not quite the phrasing, of the sentiments, is correct as to fact in each particular.

‡ See "A Faithful Remembrance."

§ Perfectly true.

¶ The graves of other loved brothers are elsewhere commemorated.

There shall be no more shadows—no more
strife—

Nor sad pulsations of a broken heart;
There, will be everlasting peace and
life,

Where friends may meet again—no more
to part.

But *now*, he sleeps where lofty palm-trees
grow,

Where grass-green plains stretch broadly
to the shore,

Where the soft winds of warmer climates
blow,

And the fierce storms of Winter shock
no more!

Thy rest will be as peaceful there as
here,

Where, under flower-decked sod and
mossy stone,

Rest calmly those so once beloved and
dear,

Lulled by some dark bough's low and
mournful tone.*

Sleep—oh! my brother—for the time is
near,

When thou wilt surely meet the lost
again—

When thou wilt be with those once loved
and dear,

When there will be no grief and no more
pain

Oh, sleep! my brother—though full many
a tear

Will fall upon thy grave, nor moan nor
sigh

Can reach again thy cold, unheeding
ear,

And yet may be sent up to thee—on
High!

So—sleep! my brother, where the bright
flowers grow,

Where the soft winds of fairer climates
blow;

The hour will come when we shall meet
again,

Where peace and love and joy for ever
reign.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

FAITH! thou dost ask too much of us, at
times—

More than our brains can bear—to bid
us gaze

Beyond the heavy shadows of our days,
Beyond the dark depression of our crimes.

Yet thou art strong! To trust is not to
know!

But it shall beautify the ghastly shroud,
And give a silver lining to the cloud;

Not gauge the depth, or permanence of
woe.

We miss—alas! how can we fail to miss!—
The sweet, fair presence even here but
now,

The light that shone upon a noble
brow—

But "thou art strong!" nor fearest *even*
this!

Gone! and not even the perfume, sweet
and faint,

Of memory, can return, without a throb
Of bitter anguish, such as well might
rob

Of peace, the very forehead of a saint!

And we may look into the Heaven's blue
vault,

And if we cannot see the Angel's wings,
Untouched by contact with our earthly
things,

Thou can'st not whisper that it is *our*
fault!

And we may watch each strange,
mysterious star,

That sets so calmly in the cold, blue
sky,

For ever silent; and, with weary sigh,
Gaze still, and wonder where the dear
ones are.

A dream for ever—*here!*—it may be wise
That in our sojourn on this lower plain,
Heaven gave us not the power to bear
the strain

Of fathoming the secret of His skies.

* This refers to the family cemetery in a pine grove.

Faith shall, at least, be ours—ah! fret
 not much,
 If thou should'st find there shall be
 secrets still,
 Too strong for human thought and
 human will,
 And things impalpable to mortal touch!

THE CHURCHYARD NEAR
 THE SEA.

(1884.)

AMONGST THE GRAVES.

O WHITED SEPULCHRES! that seem so
 fair!

Your fatal secrets many fain would
 know—

Ye vaults that hide our madness, our
 despair,

Or hold the casket of our joys below.

O flower-decked dwellings!* ye are also
 brave

With marble carvings, gilt and bas-
 reliefs;

Ye all profane the sadness of the grave,
 Ye are but mocking at our human
 griefs!

So fair without, and yet so foul within!
 Though here the resting-place of sacred
 joys,

'Tis here the dark abode of foulest sin,
 Of proud ambition Death alone
 destroys!

* * * * *

I pray that o'er my grave they may but
 strew

The *violet*, or the marguerite's sad
 bloom,

With withered sprays of bitter-sweet and
 rue,

Leaves of pale sorrow, fittest for the
 tomb.

* * * * *

Here lies a rose-bud withered—oh! thou
 art

A sad, heart-breaking witness at the
 best—

I would have prayers and tears from sor-
 row's heart,
 Or solemn calm that most befits Life's
 rest.

Ah, sad and broken flowers, ye make me
 weep

To see ye withering thus beneath the
 sky:

For sorrow is too lasting, is too deep,
 To soothe itself with earthly things that
 die.

Corruption lies below—not of our love,
 Whose sacred forms no longer slumber
 there;

Their peaceful dwelling is with God above,
 Not in the dreary depths of our despair!

IN THE WATCHES OF THE
 NIGHT—LONG AGO.

In the strange visions of the far-off past,
 A young girl wanders in the pale moon-
 light,†

Her steps are thoughtful, and her eyes up-
 cast,

Musing upon a vision fair and bright.

Those eyes look calm and steadfast, yet
 therein

Seems something shadowed, of a time
 unknown—

Of cruel sorrows, of paths hard to win,
 Of hatred, spite—of sweet fruits turned
 to stone;

With something of a brighter world be-
 yond,

A thrilling whisper of a gentle voice,
 That bids the fainting soul to not despond,
 The sad heart to look forward to rejoice.

EYES OF LIGHT.

(ONE BELOVED!)

HER gaze was full of charity and love,
 She knew all grief was sent us from above;
 She looked on sin and suffering, with the
 eyes

Of tender pity, rather than surprise.

* At ——— was a churchyard, in which the plan of *gaily* decorating graves with bright flowers was—
 at least in our opinion—carried to an extreme.—“*The ground made sacred by thy relics now.*”—POPE.

† E. M. F.

She knew there was a far-off, peaceful
land—
A fair, sweet shore, where vessels may not
strand—
Where the fierce contests of this world shall
cease,
Where there shall be contentment, love,
and peace.

She knew the troubles of this world were
great,
Even, sometimes, of a scarce enduring
weight;
She knew that many died beneath the
strain,
That earthly succour often proved in vain.

Beyond this world she gazed—where there
is rest—
Where Death is powerless and sorrow
blessed,
And waited patiently the hour to come,
For peace and calm in Heaven's eternal
home.

No trouble wearied her, if it could give
Some joy to those who, suffering, yet need
live;
And many said that often on her face
Shone all the glory of an angel's grace.

MUTABILITY.

I SAW her, with her face so young and
fair—

I saw her, with her eyes so glad and
bright—

I saw her, with her wavelets of rich hair—
I saw her, with her step so blithe and
light—

I marked her love for every simple flower,
Each nest that hid itself in fragrant
thorn;

Her fair hands full of work, each passing
hour,
Her gay and ringing song at earliest
dawn—

I saw her, with her faithful, happy lover,
Wandering through summer woods at
twilight grey,

So in her glowing prime, and could dis-
cover
No shadow on the sunshine of her day!

I saw her in the arms of cruel disease,
And when her outlook was but one of
sorrow;
Neither the hour of pleasure, nor of ease,
Could she look forward to on each sad
morrow.

O world of ours! thou art so full of pain!
It is so sweet to die—so hard to live;
I would not try thy stormy paths again
For all bright promises that thou could'st
give!

TWO LOVED MEMORIES.

I.

UPON old Verulam's forgotten soil,
I rested, with my child upon my knee;
It was the closing hour of rural toil,
Softly the cattle moved across the lea.

I set my darling on old Roman walls,
I told her of the wars of olden times,
And where the shadow of the Abbey falls,
We listened to its bells' discordant
chimes.*

A grand, historic platform! stained with
guilt,
Of which men keep some deathless re-
cords still;
Though o'er the rude walls later hands
had built,
On which the weeds and mosses grew
at will.

The sound of trumpets pealed not in the
air,
The peaceful caw of rooks instead was
heard;

The smiling land was bountiful and fair,
Full of the low of cattle, song of bird.

Here once the feet of fearless warriors
trod,
Of whose fierce deeds we now but little
know;

The gentle daisies over-run the sod,
And men forget the dust that lies below!

* St. Alban's Abbey. Half of the bells of that old tower were cracked.

A SAD LULLABY.

(See pages 22 and 23.)

SLEEP, little one, for I am ever near,
 Both in the night and through the hours
 of day,
 Sleep, precious one, who art to us so dear;
 Thy parents o'er thee watch, and ever
 pray
 That strength and joy, ere long, again
 may shine
 Out of those sweet and tender eyes of
 thine.

Sleep, little one. Around thee lightly fall
 The soft, pink curtains, flushing thy pale
 cheek;

Sleep, precious one, so prized and loved
 by all;

Although, alas! so wasted and so weak—
 Pray God, a better time is nearing now,
 To bring back health to that fair, childish
 brow.

Sleep, little one: the fevered hour is past,
 Fresh *violets* now are ready for thy
 hand,

Thy days of darkness, dear, are gone at
 last,

Thy good physician hath a magic wand!—
 And yet may run again those little feet,
 When sunlight glows, where flowers are
 fresh and sweet.

Sleep, little one, for I am ever near,
 Both in the night and through the hours
 of day;

Sleep, precious one, who art to us so dear:
 Thy parents o'er thee watch, and ever
 pray

That strength and joy, ere long, again
 may shine

Out of those sweet and tender eyes of
 thine.

TWO LOVED MEMORIES.—II.

THE LITTLE GARDEN.

(See page 45.)

'Twas here that her small footsteps used
 to stray,
 In the first coolness of an autumn day,

To gather damask roses, whose sweet
 heads

Hung, in the cold winds, on their frosted
 beds.

And here, where snows of winter lay so
 deep,

Her hand of pity scattered crumbs, to
 keep

The birds of summer through the wintry
 days,

Till April's sun should rise, with warmer
 rays.

Here was her little garden, here she grew
 Hepaticas of pink or tender blue,
 And lilies of the tallest—always white—
 Auriculas, and Bethlehem "stars of
 night!"*

Ah, little garden! I no more can tread
 Thy moss-grown paths, on which the roses
 shed

Their pallid leaves, as summer days
 depart—

So fare thee well—thy memories wring
 my heart!

TO VIOLET.

(See pages 44 to 48.)

GOD is with thee, my darling! thou art
 brave

With all the bravery of a noble breast;
 The God who takes away—the God who
 gave—

Is One on whom thy trust will ever rest.

God is with thee, my darling! We will
 still

Look forward to a calmer, brighter day,
 When yet shall pass from thee this load
 of ill—

For this at morn, at noon, at night, we
 pray.

To hear that thou hast rested, smiled, or
 slept,

Is still our constant thought, by night,
 by day;

All other troubles, once so sadly wept,
 Are lost in this one thought, or passed
 away.

* These flowers V—— especially liked.

Oh, let no trouble thy pure breast disturb—
 There yet may dawn bright days of calm
 and peace;
 I, too, all tumult of my heart will curb,
 And bid my restless, mourning thoughts
 to cease.*
May, 1881.

THE WORLD'S LOSS.

A HEART-BROKEN CRY: IN
 MEMORIAM (V. F. T.)

The world hath lost a saint—
 A light hath passed from earth, and sky,
 and sea,
 And looking upward, dizzy, sick, and
 faint,
 We marvel why so cruel a loss should be

We spare her ill—
 To us there is none other, on this earth,
 A place so rarely sanctified to fill,
 To bless as she hath blessed it, from her
 birth.

O God! the task is hard
 To read Thy kindness in so stern a blow!
 Love's tender flesh full bitterly is
 scarred—
 The marks remain for ever, here below!

Beloved and wept by all—
 Purest and best of all the earth's sweet
 flowers,
 Ah me! the Hand seems cruel that
 could recall
 A joy that we had looked upon as ours!

Only—Thou knowest best!
 She may be happier in that world of
 Thine,
 Where all are with eternal freedom
 blessed,
 Loosed from the bonds of which we here
 repine.

But yet—we have so few
 Like her, to brighten up this world of
 pain;
 And Life is a dull moor, or desert view,
 Where we may search for her, and search
 in vain!

The world is bleak and drear--
 The bravest, even, shudder and despond;
 The bright go home, and leave us
 weeping here—
 Ah! well for us there is a world
 beyond!

Hope is the only cheer,
 The only brightness in this gloomy sky;
 And oft, to us, the hour most fair, most
 dear,
 Is that when, weary, we lie down to die.

HOLY PATIENCE.

So Earth hath lost an angel! Thou hast
 passed
 Into the realms of everlasting peace—
 Thy bitter foe hath lost all power at last,
 The throes of unrelenting pain now
 cease!

A lesson full of reverence hast thou taught
 By thy sweet calm, thy patience deep
 and wide—
 But ah! a lesson with such anguish
 fraught,
 Would I, ere I had learned it thus, had
 died!

Thus patient wert thou from thy earliest
 years,
 Through all the hours of pain thy life
 hath run—
 Grief hath been thine, but never selfish
 tears—
 The world can spare thee ill, thou gentle
 one!

Yes! patience such as thine is rare below,
 Nor often sanctifies our human race;
 And few thus meekly bear the cross of
 woe,
 That marked, alas! how early, thy
 sweet face.

Oh! one like thee we shall not meet again,
 With eyes so soft and gentle in their
 pleading,
 And grateful, in the very midst of pain,
 For the sad cares thy suffering state
 was needing.

* These lines were read to the beloved one.

So perfect in thy womanhood—so calm—
 Thy mind replete with full and noble
 thought;
 And something sweet, and as the very
 balm
 Of holiness, thy presence ever brought.

All things by Heaven created had to thee
 An ever-deepening interest, all thine
 own,
 Even to the habits of the bird and bee,
 And thou could'st read a "sermon in a
 stone!" *

And all things Heaven had sent upon this
 earth
 Some portion of their lives to thee could
 give,
 Some interest in their progress, in their
 worth,
 The wherefore they should die, the
 wherefore live!

Yet hast thou left us! gentle, loving, wise,
 By all who knew thee mourned for and
 beloved;
 Thou hast forsaken us for holier skies,
 Wept for on earth, and by thy God
 approved!

BELOVED AND LOST.

SHE lived upon the border-land of saints—
 The land that is so circumscribed on
 earth—
 The land that mortal pencil feebly paints,
 Where selfish thoughts and cravings have
 no birth.

Her voice was tender as the soft west
 wind,
 Touching each early bud with loving
 touch;
 Though wisdom with compassion was com-
 bined,
 Her large heart felt for all, aye, felt too
 much!

Her eyes were blue, with twilight's softest
 blue,
 For o'er the brightness was a pensive
 shade;

Her gentle heart knew—more than others
 knew—
 How sorrow should be met and pain
 allayed!

We whom she left behind shall miss her
 ever,
 "Return! return!" we cry, alas! in
 vain!

No one can fill her holy place, and never
 Shall step like hers fall on the ear again.

Ah! none can fill her place, for none could
 be
 What she hath been to us, in love and
 grace—
 Sweet blossom, lent from Heaven's
 eternity,
 Returning now to its own native place.

THE LESSON OF THE BELL; OR, THE PASSING BELL.

It is the passing bell!
 The last weird echo of a soul's farewell!
 Softly it trembles through the dawning
 skies,
 Softly it falls and dies.

It is the passing bell!
 Gently its strokes reverberate and swell,
 Then wander out upon the distant plain.
 As sighing—Life is vain!

It is the passing bell!
 That holds the world's dull heart as with
 a spell,
 Whispering its lesson to each forest leaf,
 The lesson—Life is brief!

It is the passing bell!
 The world is listening in its shadowed dell,
 The world is listening on its loftiest hill,
 Its busy heart—is still!

It is the passing bell!
 It is a sad and suffering mortal's knell,
 That warns us that our life is but a breath,
 A path—alone—to Death!

It is the passing bell!
 A last, sad message to the world to tell—
 A message of despair, or hope, or fear—
 Then dies, in lingering echoes, on the
 ear!

* Among other studies, Violet showed particular interest in geology.

FATHER! OH, GRANT ME MERCY!

(THE CRY OF A FRETFUL SOUL.)

FATHER! oh, grant me mercy—I am sore
With suffering, and my heart is full of
pain;

I cannot look to years that seem before,
To know the calmness of the past again.

Father! in Life there is no rest, no peace;
The world's deep sorrows fill the heart
with fear—

I pray Thee grant me speedily release—
I pray Thee loose the bonds that bind
me here.

Father! forgive me; but the path I tread
With pains and penalties is sore beset—
Forgive that I have sighed that I were
dead,

I know that but the weak of spirit fret.

Yes! I should rather pray to Thee for
strength

To bear the heavy chastening of Thy
hand—

But I have struggled sorely, though at
length—

I pray thee, take me to the better land!

Ah! be not angry with me that I pray—

Father! release me from Life's galling
chain—

My life is full of shadows, cold and grey—

Ah! let me not appeal to Thee in vain!

EYES DIM WITH WEeping.

EYES dim with weeping—why do ye look
not

On Heaven, but watch the mists below
the sky

Our lines are cast on but a paltry spot,

Our life, on earth, is even but a sigh.

To-day is bright, to-morrow dark—we
hear,

And note, in other paths that are not
ours,

The sigh—the moan—the lover's bitter
tear,

Pass as the roses from midsummer
bowers.

It is in vain! Not on this troubled earth,
The slender part of Life is rooted long;
And oft, upon the spot that knew our
birth,

Men chant for us the sad, funereal song

It is vain our varied paths are traced
Upon the map of Life with our own
hand—

Now through a blooming garden—now a
waste—

With summer now—now winter, on the
land—

Eyes dim with weeping—why do ye look
not

On Heaven, but watch the mists that
veil our sky;

Our lines are cast on but a paltry spot,
Our life, on earth, is even but a sigh.

A BITTER CRY!

FATHER! my teeth are set in bitter bread,
Its taste is vile—is profitless and sour—
Embittered by the tears upon it shed,
That fall upon it thickly, every hour.

Father! my feet are but in stormy ways,
My heart is heavy with incessant sighs—
And when to Thee my weeping eyes I
raise,

I only see the shadows of Thy skies!

Father! there is no lightness in my
heart,

But even as lead it lieth in my breast;
I pray Thee, Father! that I may depart—
I pray Thee, oh! my Father—*give me
rest!*

Our life, alas! is weary on this earth,
Oppressed by many pains, by many
woes;

Even from the seeming bright hour of its
birth

Until the curtain falls upon its close.

'Tis well for us, when we have some true
friend,

Whose heart is ever faithful to the core,
One who is true and loving to the end,
One we may trust is ours for ever—
more!

THE COMING REST!

AH, soul! restrain thy grief,
 Thy hours on earth are brief—
 A pilgrimage, through which 'tis well to
 pray,
 For help from Heaven — upon thy
 darkened way.

Thy tears are wasted tears,
 Thy past, heart-breaking years,
 Thy moment's sunshine and thy hours of
 pain
 Have vanished—yet may all return again!

Be patient, weary soul,
 Thou soon may'st reach that goal
 From which the clouds of Heaven are
 ever bending
 To which thy weary steps are ever tending.

By some mysterious Will
 The sweetest tones grow still—
 Here, glad or sorry, we retrace, no more,
 The steps we took so heedlessly before!

Yea! but a little hour,
 Through skies that lift, or lower,
 Ere labour shall be over, and thine eyes
 Re-open to the light of fairer skies!

A MESSENGER FROM HEAVEN.

EVEN by the falling shadow of the tomb
 We look into Love's sweet and tender
 eyes;
 We press our warm lips on her cheek of
 bloom,
 Believing, dreaming, true love never
 dies.

We gather with fond hands the dewy
 flowers,
 While the calm hours of twilight softly
 pass,
 Lost in fond visions of the deepening
 hours,
 As herds move slowly o'er the swards
 of grass.

Aye! slowly, sadly, as the day declines,
 We muse upon Life's ever-changeful
 fate;

Slowly and sadly as the pale moon shines,
 And the hushed hours grow tender, dim,
 and late.

Death! even when he knows that Life is
 dear,
 Seeks for his own some sweet and
 cherished spot—
 Dream he is far off, and behold him
 near!
 Call for his aid, and thou wilt find him
 not!

Seek for him with the eyes that darkly
 weep—
 Seek for him on the bleakest, wildest
 plain—
 Seek for him in the tempests of the deep—
 Ah! it may be thou yet shalt *seek in
 vain!*

Or pray to him that he no dread shall
 bring,
 Hollow of eyes, and grim and gaunt of
 shape!
 He shadows thee with his mysterious wing,
*He stands beside thee, thou shalt not
 escape!*

LOVED FOR EVERMORE.—I.

FOR still this troubled earth shall know
 no day,
 But some sweet, though sad, thought of
 "her" shall come—
 If yet but mournfully to pass away—
 Back to this earth that once she made
 her home.

Her fair, young face I see beneath the
 stars,
 She is of them, so beautiful, so holy—
 So far away from all earth's angry jars,
 As from its dark, pathetic melancholy.

Once mine—remembered ever! she is part
 Of all my life on earth for evermore;
 Her tender love is living in my heart,
 Although the course of her pure life
 is o'er.

O earthly life! thy lessons here are sad,
 And oft as we recall thy earlier years,

Each seems a vision in deep mourning
clad,
And one we gaze upon through blinding
tears.

We seek to hide our sorrows in the tomb,
We oft would bury them beneath the
sod;
Yet they awaken in the midnight gloom,
To lift our mourning thoughts from
earth to God!

LOVED FOR EVERMORE.—II.

SHE comes to me oft in still hours of
night,
She stands before me in faint robes of
white;
I look into her sweet and tender eyes,
Neither with fear, with dread, nor yet
surprise.

I look upon her young and placid brow,
Marked by no heavy stain of sorrow now;
I look upon that dearest face in vain
For trace of wearied patience or of pain.

Her thoughtful lips are parted, yet are
stirred
Not by the utterance of the faintest word;
I long once more to lay her on my breast,
But I am silent, heart-struck, and op-
pressed.

Still that same heaven-born look—eyes as
of old,
Forbearing and out-looking, never cold—
But with that mystic gaze that seemed to
say,
Though dwelling here, she *was not of our*
clay!

Then doth she pass away, not with a
sigh,
But as one bound for a far happier sky;
And I am left to mourn her as before—
Once loved, beloved, and wept for ever-
more.

THE FAINTING SPIRIT.

THE paths of Life stretch out a weary
way!
Sick of past visions, dreading griefs to
come,

In some ungrateful moods I fain would
pray—
Father! I weary! Father—take me
home!

Ah! let me leave this world of sin and
pain,
Of vulgar sorrow, and more vulgar joy,
Where each man seeks his own mean
prize to gain,
Nor cares though he his neighbour's
should destroy!

And, striding on beneath indifferent skies,
His dearest object oft the poorest thing,
Through sin, or sorrow, still we hear his
cries—
“The King is dead!” and then,
“Long live the King!”

Each man is for himself—or so they say—
Each striving to be foremost in the race;
And though he sees his fellows oft the
prey
Of greed and sin, it stayeth not *his* pace!

His eyes are on some dazzling object
fixed—
Some object that in brilliant light ap-
pears;
Alas! we fear his thoughts are rarely
mixed
With pain for others' pains and others'
tears!

The paths of Life stretch out a weary
way!
Sick of past visions, dreading griefs to
come,
In some ungrateful moods I fain would
pray,
Father! I weary! Father—take me
home!

MUSINGS ON LIFE.

LIFE and its brilliant visions shine no
longer
As once they shone in youth's exultant
days;
And hour by hour, and day by day, grows
stronger
Our hope in realms that are beyond our
gaze.

Our eyes no longer watch for spring's
return,
For sweet flowers blooming as they
bloomed before!
The brilliant fires of old no longer burn,
Nay, even their ashes we preserve no
more!

There is a life beyond this sad one, where
The soul is free from bitterness and
grief,
Where Faith unlocks the grim bolts of
despair,
And love shall be immortal—sorrow,
brief.

Even as the ocean waters ebb and flow,
Even if the sun be set, the hour be
late,
That sun, in setting, sends an after-glow—
So Hope returns to those who, patient,
wait!

Hope is indeed immortal, and survives
The age fits of Age, the blows of
Fate;
Through the long, dreary paths of human
lives
It leads us on to the Eternal Gate!

AS A STRANGE DREAM!

LIFE! looking back thou art as a strange
dream!
Now fair as moonlight on a moorland
stream,
Bright as are fire-flies in the forest gloom,
Fair as the lilies that through summer
bloom.

Life! looking back thou art as a strange
dream!
Less like a meteor, with a passing gleam,
Than like an *ignis fatuus* — now so
bright,
Now lost in plains of dry and bitter night.

Life! looking back thou art as a strange
dream!
A mote now dancing in the sun's bright
beam,
Now as a glorious planet, whose fair
rays
Shall be forgotten in earth's stormier days.

Life! looking back thou art as a strange
dream!
Thy calm now broken by a demon's
scream,
Or by a trumpet's strong, triumphant
blast,
Things that brought fear, or wonder as
they passed.

Life! looking back thou art as a strange
dream!
Now, as an angel's, men thy steps esteem,
Now as a very demon's—sent from Hell—
Of whose foul deeds no rash lips dare
to tell!

TOO FAIR ART THOU, O HAPPINESS, TO LAST!

Too fair art thou, O Happiness, to last!
And even as we feel thy wholesome
breath,
'Tis swept away by some tempestuous
blast
That hurls our fair flowers to the land
of death.

Too fair art thou, O Happiness, to last!
We dream we hold—with firmness hold
—thy hand,
Even as thy skies grow slowly overcast,
And foul miasma settles on thy land.

Too fair art thou, O Happiness, to last!
We wander through thy fields of golden
grain;
To see them changed into a desert vast,
And hear the north wind howl across
the plain.

Too fair art thou, O Happiness, to last!
Even as we look up to thy sunny brow,
Our days of wandering by thy side have
passed,
The rotted fruit is dropping from the
bough.

Too fair art thou, O Happiness, to last!
And as thy light, thy fragrant paths we
thread,
Thy gentle steps grow faster and more
fast—
Then leave us, in the precincts of the
dead!

TRULY THE DAYS ARE FEW.

TRULY, the days are few when earth is
bright,
From the sweet early dawn to bitter night,
And when the swarming plains of earth
below,
Know neither sound of discontent, nor
woe!

The days are few wherein no man shall
weep,
And when the wail of grief is laid to
sleep,
And when the lips assume a smiling air,
And when the brow shows never line of
care.

Alas! the days of life appear but few,
When clouds obscure not Heaven's too
distant blue;
And when, although the air be sweet and
warm,
Lies not in wait, some fierce, or blighting
storm!

And yet *shall be* an hour, we still believe,
When those whose faith is strong shall
cease to grieve,
And when the lightning's flash, the thun-
der's roar,
Shall vex the dwellers of this earth no
more;

And when in purer realms than these
below,
A brighter sun, a sweeter light shall glow,
That, shining down from Heaven's celestial
skies,
Shall light the gladness of immortal eyes!

AN EVENING PRAYER.

FATHER! be merciful and full of pity!
Give us from strife and anguish some
relief;
From the lone cot, as from the crowded
city,
Come moans of want, of grief.

We grope but in the dark, but Thou hast
light
In the Eternity that Thou hast blessed—

Lift up the heavy shadow of our night,
And grant us peace and rest!

Lost in the hush of forests, we remember
The far-off world of battle and com-
motion—

Or muse among the sea-fogs of November,
Beside Thy restless ocean.

Father! be merciful! Our hearts are
faint

And sad, as must be all Thou placest
here—

Oh! purify us from all earthly taint,
And give us rest—from Fear!

Grant us some glimpse of that Eternal
Joy

Where the weird sounds of sin and sor-
row cease,

Where tears shall blister not, nor rust
destroy,

And where—*there shall be peace!*

FATHER! THE HOUR IS
LATE.

FATHER! the hour is late, and I am
weary—

When may I leave the world, and come
to Thee?

The skies are starless, and the skies are
dreary,

There is no light on mountain, plain,
or sea.

Father! the hour is late, the time is
long,

I thought, ere now, its limits had been
reached;

But still I hear the pilgrim's chanting
song,

And still the lessons by our pastors
preached.

Patience! oh! patience—all things here
must end;

The rose must blossom, and the rose
lies dead;

Let not the mourner his sad garments
rend,

Nor strew pale sorrow's ashes on his
head.

Patience! oh! patience—see! the lurid
sun

Rises at morn above the pallid hill,
And runs his course until that course is
done—

The world is loud at noon—at night is
still.

Father! the day is long, and I am clad
In sackcloth.—Light is dull on land and
sea—

When shall the morning break? My heart
is sad,

And waits the hour when I may come
to Thee!

TO MY LOVE.

(1880.)

LOVE! were it not for thy true, tender
hand,

That binds the cords around Life's
bleeding veins,

I know not—I—if I could oft withstand
The many fierce assaults of earthly
pains.

Love! were it not *once* for thy help, the
crown

Of joy thy hand upon my forehead
placed

And held with loving strength, had fallen
down,

And all its tender brightness been
effaced.

Oh, Love! the fairest flowers of southern
lands,

The loveliest sea-shells of the Indian
sea,

The brightest summer skies that earth
commands,

*Nay, all the world were dreary without
thee!*

And I know well I had not valued much
The gift of Life — decree of Higher
Will—

Had it not been for thy most gracious
touch

Of knowledge, of compassion, and of
skill!

PASSED!

I HAVE been down into the hell of pain,
Through countless days and nights I
prayed to die;

Those prayers for mercy ever seemed in
vain,

There came no answer from the distant
sky.

I prayed, with all the rain of bitter tears—
The heart of clemency seemed yet un-
stirred;

*Yet I have lived on into later years,
Grateful that my wild prayers were
then unheard.*

'Tis well the hand of God is 'gainst self-
slaughter,

That we know that this present is not
all,

That in our anguish Heaven's most gentle
daughter—

Mild pity—lets her mantle on us fall.

Alas! our prayers come from a weary
heart!

Alas! our griefs are of a maddened
brain;

We play on earth a sad and troubled part,
To die of weariness and overstrain.

Be thankful that our future is not ours,
But dwells within Eternity's vast breast,
And that it ever lies beyond our powers,
Even from our birth, until the night of
rest!

LOOKING BACK.

(1880.)

"I AM so tired, dear love," yet once
she said;

"I grow so hopeless, would that I were
dead!

I am so useless, weighted with this pain—
Even thou can'st scarce relieve me, love,
again!

"Yes! love, I can but pray this pain might
cease,

That I, at last, were left to rest in peace;

Did I but know thou would'st not grieve,
nor sigh,
*Then would I pray Heaven even this hour
to die!"*

"Love! it is sinful thus to speak! I know
Thy long hours are o'erweighted now with
woe,"

He answered, "Yet despair not, even once
more

May come back the bright strength so
prized before."

* * * * *

Years passed! Then slowly dawned a
brighter hour,

A slow renewal of hope, strength, and
power,

The life of work, of sweet, fair duties grew,
And Heaven again looked placid—kindly—
blue!

Yes! faith once more in her tired bosom
burned,

Yes! strength, and joy in strength, again
returned;

And in a calmer, if still mournful time,
She looked on that past utterance as—a
crime!

THE HOUR IS LATE!

AGAIN, the hour is late, the sky is dark,
There seems no light our homeward path
to mark,

Yet fear not I shall wander far away,
So thou, O love! wilt guide me on my way.

For I, when I am by thy side, can feel
A calmness free from earthly passions
steal

O'er my vexed thoughts and o'er my
wearied eyes,

Till sad tears dry and Grief forgets her
sighs.

And when the shades of life grow dense
and long,

Thy voice still cheers me onwards, as the
song

Of wearied pilgrims, wandering by that
shore

They know their steps shall traverse never
more!

Thou giv'st all help that Sympathy *can*
give,

So that even I am yet content to live—

Oh! let me dwell for ever in thy heart,
Pray never day shall dawn when we two
part!

TO —.

(Words of resignation, after recovering from a
long and nearly fatal illness).

MINE own true love, the day is slowly
dawning!

Methought the dreary night had never
passed—

That I had never lived to see the morn-
ing—

Yet slowly, peacefully, it breaks at last!

Will there be peace in those yet unliv-
ed years,

Whose days, unfolded, lie before mine
eyes?

Will they bring bitterness, regret, and
tears,

Or calm and rest return, as sorrow dies?

God only knows! In patience we must
wait,

Sorrow comes early — joy is, oftentimes,
late—

And later still may come a gentle close
To stormy days—the dawn of Heaven's
repose!

DARK DREAMS!

(LATER MUSINGS.)

STILL, at the midnight's hour of gloomy
dreams,

I sit and muse upon the days gone by,
That now a life of other cycles seems,

One passed beneath some unknown,
foreign sky.

Was it *my* heart that once so nearly broke?
Were those *my* hopes that withered on
the land—

That died beneath misfortune's heavy
stroke—

Beneath the pressure of Fate's cruel
hand?

My groans and prayers that wearied
Heaven so long,

For the cold silence of the last, long
sleep?—

Now but the strain of some sad, distant song,
Whose very echoes force my soul to
weep.

Ah! as the phantoms of a frightful dream,
Whose pale eyes streamed with everlasting tears,
From ghastly realms, not ours, shall ever seem

The sharp, cruel agonies of bygone years.

Go back, then, to thine own dark shades
—no more

Chill the late sunlight of our autumn's day —

The sun may shine, though never as before,

So thy pale ghosts haunt not again my way!

ASHES TO ASHES, HATH THE PREACHER SIGHED.

FAR, far away into the gloomy shade,
Pass the dark shapes that haunted the betrayed;

Their evil day *was*, but that day is o'er,
They shadow a beloved spot no more;
Nor even in the churchyard shall their tread

Again tramp over our beloved dead.

The fruits that they have stolen now are rotten;

Only—their former bloom is unforgotten!
The flowers that they have gathered on
our land

Have lost their beauty in each blighting hand;

Only shall memory, though with bitter sighs,

Bring back their beauty to still faithful eyes.

Evil and dark shall be some earthly ways,
Hate fills with calumnies their heavy days;

All fruits are sour that grow within *her* bowers,

The breath of northern winds destroys *her* flowers,

And she and hers go onward to their dooms,

And men shall hang no garlands on their tombs.

So let them rest—forgotten—it were well!
Lest some unhappy legends of them tell—
Point out the evil marks that they have made,

And show how often Honour was waylaid.

Ashes to ashes, hath the Preacher sighed;
Go! seek for sweeter plains—the world is wide!

A LATER SONG.

THERE are those who the bed of Death
shall seek,

Their evil words beneath her wing to speak—

Oh! there are those who shall not even cease

To lie where pallid Grief should rest in peace!

Their bitter words hurt not the ear of Death,

Though they be breathed with Hell's malignant breath;

They shall not trouble those that lie at rest—

By Evil, here, no more are they distressed.

Only, these echoes living ears may reach,
And still Earth's weary lesson—Patience—teach;

And though may Evil's days be dark and long,

Yet Truth may, sternly, *sing a later song!*

Unwholesome mists may shroud the earth awhile,

Then disappear before the sunset's smile;
And Love, though distant as the evening star,

May shine down even upon a field of war.

Good often shall resume her broken reins,

And Evil shall be driven from her plains;
And tired hearts shall grow restful, as the eyes

Turn from earth's darkness to eve's glowing skies.

TIME SEEKETH TO OBLITERATE —IN VAIN.

“WHEN sorrow sleepeth, wake it not”—
they say—

Therefore was mine crushed sternly under foot;

And yet it is no grief to pass away,
That sorrow hath, God knows, a *deathless* root.

And there are hours when such sad notes
are stirred,

So full of shadows pressing on my heart,
Despite myself, that voice must needs be
heard,

And sleep is broken, with a sudden
start.

And so I hear a low, soft voice again,
Whose tones of tenderness for earth are
o'er,

The thrilling echoes of a loving strain—
*That touch—shall touch—my heart for
evermore.*

Once more those thoughtful, gentle,
dreamy eyes

Look into mine, and with their tender
gaze

Recall that grief that rests — but never
dies—

A thing of present, as of long past
days.

Ah, yes—these memories are of life too
sweet

A part to die, as flowers on earth's
broad plain;

My soul those records, shall for ever greet;
Time seeketh to obliterate—in vain.*

EVENING MEDITATIONS.

THE evening shades steal softly o'er the
sky,

Until they reach the ocean's distant
verge;

The sounds of earth are but the north
wind's sigh,

And of the waves the faintly-hissing
surge.

Alas! not always thus our shadows fade
Into the glory of a heavenly blue;

Too oft they close around with deepening
shade,

Then gather to a gloom of darkest hue!

Lift from the sea thine eyes, oh! weary
man,

And turn to heaven thy sad and wistful
look;

Remember that thy life is but a span,
Eternity a never-ending Book!

We spring but as the flowers—as flowers
we die,

And morn and noon are followed by the
night;

And here we follow life, with tear and
sigh,

Until we pass to Heaven's Eternal
Light!

THE SLOW DAWN OF PEACE.

FATHER! Thou hast been merciful—
beyond

All expectation of Thy grace—of mine;
Thou dost forgive me even that I despond,
And foolishly, in some dark hours,
repine.

I know, too well, that I am rarely meek—
I know, too well, mine is a stubborn
heart;

I know too well, that I am often weak,
And need Thy help to play a higher
part.

That golden help I ask from Thee, O
God!

The help that Thou hast ever given to
prayer;

The thorny pathways that my steps once
trod,

I now will tread with hope, not with
despair.

Thy Hand to guide me in the gloomy
night—

Thy Hand to bind the bitter wounds
that bleed—

Thy Hand to point out all fair paths of
Light,

I know, O God! is all in life I need.

That help is promised unto all that pray
With earnest faith and with repentant
tears,

“Oh! guide us ever to Thy higher way,
Through the dark pitfalls of our earthly
years!”

* Refers to her lost child.

WEIRD MISTS, AND OTHER POEMS.

IN THE WATCHES OF THE NIGHT.

1885.

WEIRD MISTS, AND OTHER POEMS.

INTRODUCTION.

A POET, in the "Watches of the Night,"
Stood musing on the troubles of this
life,

The flowers that only seem to spring to
blight,

The countless sorrows with which earth
is rife—

The soured hearts that are found for ever
ready

To draw, in strongest lines, the lines of
woe—

The steps that for the right are so un-
steady—

The steps that for the wrong are never
slow—

And sighed—Is there no rest on earthly
plains—

Only the weary griefs of the betrayed,
Only the acrid heart, that ever strains
To find far less of sunlight than of
shade?

If lilies wither with the north wind's
breath—

If glowing roses blight upon their
stems—

If fairest life shall soonest meet with
death,

Doth earth retain and hold *no* pearls—
no gems?

Ask not!—life is no mystery man shall
read

While he is here—himself of earthly
sod—

Ask not—nor yet discard the Christian's
creed—

Have faith that there is mercy and—a
God!

WEIRD MISTS.

THROUGH the WEIRD MISTS the spirits
dimly gleam,

As the full moon sails through the
fleecey clouds—

Even as the phantoms of some ghastly
dream,

Wrapt in unholy winding-sheets and
shrouds—

And through their shapes the silent stars
are shining,

Yet leave their outlines traced upon the
sky—

And slowly, slowly—with the hours de-
clining,

Each vanishes, before the gazer's eye—

Whence come ye—spirits pale? Can ye
not sleep,

Through memories of some unforgiven
crime?

Aye! Whence arise the wailing tones that
sweep

Through the still air 'at midnight's
ghostly time?

Could ye but speak—what tales might ye
not tell!

What legends of remorse, of sin, of
fear—

Ah! what of the veiled secrets of that
Hell

Of which such ghastly tales are whis-
pered here!

It may be well ye cannot!—no man knows
What may be the black depths of that
despair—

Nor what unearthly scenes ye might dis-
close—

Tales far too ghastly for *our* brains to
bear.

Go! follow the dim moon into the waves,
In the sad train of autumn-midnight's
tears!

Go down into the mariner's wild graves—
Rest! rest! such sorrows are not for our
ears!

THE COMPLAINT OF A PILGRIM OF EARTH.

TRULY some paths of life are cold and
hard—

The mists are heavy on the mountain
land—

O God!—our weak and wandering foot-
steps guard,

Grant us the guidance of Thy mighty
Hand!

Falsehood and shrill contempt and scorn-
ful wrong

May cast a dull despair upon our way—
The shadows of the vile are coarse and
strong—

They shut from us the open light of
day—

And as I wander in the dark, O God!
Losing the voice that comforts me alone,
Both on the stony road and grassy sod
Mine enemies their bitter seeds have
sown—

They choose the time of my despair, to
crush

Into the dust the fairest of my flowers;
Nor even for their evil steps they blush,
But break the calm of melancholy
hours—

They have no pity in their bitter hearts,
Their voices ring with falsehood—insult
—wrong—

And even as the mournful day departs
Their mocking accents grow more rude
and strong—

Alas! the paths of life are cold and hard—
The mists are heavy on the mountain
land—

O God!—our weak and wandering foot-
steps guard,

Grant us the guidance of Thy mighty
Hand!

ANSWERING WORDS OF CHEER.

THY hour is troubled now—thy sky is
dark,
And bitter souls are out upon thy way—

Thou hast been long used, even as a
mark,
For all that lips of jealousy can say—

Thou art unarmed—defenceless to their
blows—

Thy brow is lined—thine eyes are dim
with weeping—

Dark shadows round thy pathway seem to
close,

And shining adds o'er thy feet are
creeping—

The northern wind through every grove is
sighing—

Dull—melancholy—is its every sound—
Thy long-untended flowers are slowly
dying,

Each petal falling withered to the
ground—

The voice of nightingale no more is
heard—

Things are abroad, of shapes uncouth
and foul—

The heavy silence of the night is stirred
Only, at times, by some far watch-dog's
howl!

Pass through this vale of darkness—and
the light

May yet shine out beyond—tender and
fair—

Fear not the gloomy shadows of the night,
Nor of the mercy of thy God despair!

IT IS THE "LEAST OF THESE."

A FAIR outside have they—shining and
bright—

As hollow trees shall show a silvered
bark—

And yet they have a vain and faulty sight,
Their steps are headstrong, and their
paths but dark—

They crave to *man* their own deserts to
show,—

Their shining merits unveil to the
crowd—

O God! their ears hear not the cries of
woe,

Of sin and anguish, that are deep—not
loud—

They have forgotten Thou hast said of old

It is the "least of these" who yet may find

The path that leads to Thee—and not the bold—

The self-assumed, the arrogant of mind.

Not those who say—"Nay! I will live apart

From both the feeble, foolish and the knave—"

Not those of "pure" and Pharisaic heart,
Who nothing follow that is strong and brave.

Not him, O God! who, passing down the road,

Seeing a starving wretch upon his path,
Will harshly turn into his rich abode,
And shut the sinner from his glowing hearth!

Yet have they fair outsides, polished and bright—

As hollow trees may show a shining bark—

Ah!—still—*their inner lives* are full of blight—

Their steps are wandering—and their eyes are dark!

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS.

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS—that cancer of the soul—

Self-righteousness—that blight upon the heart—

The certainty that *we* shall reach the goal,
Unheeding from what standing-point we start!—

Self-righteousness! yes! man will judge his brother,

Woman her sister—gloating o'er each sin,

Judging from outside-seeming—and no other,

Forgetting God alone can see within.

It lieth, as some broad, unsavoury slough,
Between men and a fair and lovely land—

It lines, with evil lines, the fairest brow,
Speaks in the proud step, in the vain, weak hand—

Self-righteousness!—could man but glance within

No follies, it may be, would *he* discern—
'Tis easy to perceive another's sin,
"Harder than Euclid" our own faults to learn!

O! ye self-righteous! it were better far
Ye should remember what of old was said—

As "whited sepulchres," alas! ye are—
As those that hear not—sleeping as the dead!

TO A SLANDERER.

THOU hateful creature, in whose bitter breast,

They say, if malice sleeps she never dies!—

By what foul spirit hast thou been possessed,

That thou should'st tell of us such end-
less lies!

Full often with disdain our lip hath curled

To hear of all the fabrications bold,
That thou, in thy poor passage through the world,

With such unblushing impudence hath told.

Thou cam'st into this world of sorrow, born

As of an evil feature on its scene—
And I have often heard thee named with scorn—

But I have not my "sister's keeper" been!

'Twas not *my* fault that thou hast had no wooers!—

And never even known of "love's young dream"—

For, being of the race of "evil doers,"
Thou hast but drifted down a shallow stream!

Thou must walk under sweeter, purer
 skies
 Ere thou content and peace on earth
 shalt find—
 Alas! thou can'st no longer cheat *our*
 eyes,
 For even the blind *may not be always*
blind!

A REWARD—BEYOND OUR POWER.

YES! what for all the evil thou hast
 done—
 For lies breathed over even our fairest
 flowers—
 Not only at the rising of the sun
 But through the daylight's many chang-
 ing hours!

What fair reward befitting *ye*, false
 friends!
 Each figuring as so honest, yet a knave—
 What for thy blasting tongue can make
 amends—
For lies that have gone down into the
grave!

Ah! what of rich and glorious shall there
 be
 Worthy as *offering*—for thy noble deeds!
 What, or of earth, or heaven, can any
 see
 Befitting thy great soul's most saintly
 needs!!

I know not—I! of *any*—that have size
 And price that shall reward a tongue
 like thine!—
 Thou needest, as I deem, too large a prize
 Than doth, alas! belong to wealth—of
mine!

ONLY—A LASTING SCORN.

"I hate them that imagine evil things."
 "They imagine but deceit."
 "As for lies I hate and abhor them."
 "They persecute me wrongfully."—PSALM CXIX.

O! PRINCE of Israel—would that in these
 days
 More, dwelling on this earth, would feel
 that hate!

Yet there are those who, passing on their
 ways,
 Will lie, even at the outposts of death's
 gate!

It is an evil taste—a ghastly thirst—
 Worse than the poisoned wine-cups of
 mad drinkers—
 These seem to know not liars are
 accursed—
 Seeing no laws can punish evil thinkers!

The more of that vile wine that he hath
 quaffed
 The dearer is it to our slanderer's lips!
 He soon regards it as a nectar-draught,
 And cannot be content with modest
sips!

"Imagining deceit" is their delight—
 To see their shameful fables melt away
 As evil myths fade in an honest light,
 Is as a hateful chill upon their day!

THE GOD OF LOVE AND NOT OF HATE!

YES! they have lied to many—*now no*
more—
 And did they even recant and pardon
 pray
 For all their lies. The time for this is
 o'er—
 They cannot come again into our way.

If thou hast known a wolf thy young ones
 tear,
 Would'st thou caress that wolf again, we
 ask—
 Devoid of every fear, or thought of care?
 Nay! God hath ne'er imposed so cruel
 a task!

God is the God of Love and not of Hate—
 He bids us turn abhorrently, from sin—
 Even earth itself holds not so dark a fate
 That wrong shall *force* us his vile
 race to win!—

They who are heard to breathe such saintly
 sighs,
 While speaking of man's hardness, with
 despair,

Who turn up sanctified and holy eyes—
Who clasp their hands with deprecating
air—

If they knew *all* the past, would be the
first

To turn all falsehood-mongers from their
paths—

To feel the slanderer is a thing accursed,
That may not rest by any wholesome
hearths.

A CONFESSION.

ALAS! — we own it — once we felt so
weak —

So beaten down by grief on every
side—

So powerless for oneself to plead — to
speak—

That save for one strong hand we must
have died.

When one shall stand, as stripped, before
the wind,

One needs must feel the breath of Arctic
skies—

Our vision is enfeebled,—almost blind—
For dust and ashes fill our streaming
eyes—

Our hands are weak, nor may we drive
away

The crowds of gnats that sting on every
side,

One falls to these the easiest, *silliest* prey,
One prays for peace, so humbled is all
pride!—

In health and strength one is ashamed to
think

One ever cared for creatures mean as
these—

Or ever felt so troubled as to shrink
Where'er their song was shrill upon the
breeze—

Yet, though we scorn them in *these* hours,
'twere not

A deed of wisdom e'er to welcome back
These noxious things into a sweeter
spot,

That they may spoil, like locusts, a
new track!

A COMFORTING CREED.

GOD made it part of His eternal plan
That man should fight the battle here
with man—

That blighting storms should come into his
day,

That sharpened flints lie scattered on his
way—

Yet is man stronger when the day shall
close—

Yet shall he gain a sweeter, far repose,—
And that he fought the war with hate—

shall prove

The hours yet dearer that are hours of
love.

The oak rejoices not in its great power

So much in calm as in the tempest's hour—

And not, before, may learn that it can
brave

The wind that wrecks, upon the ocean
wave—

They who but walk through lanes of sum-
mer flowers,

Pluck easily the fruit from garden bowers,

Bind up the ripened wheat with practised
hand—

Know not the hail that desolates the land—

They have no strength, no will, in darker
times,

To fight with sloth—to sternly stamp out
crimes—

To speak up for the wronged—to fight the
fight

That Love and Courage here shall wage
for Right!

THE POSSIBLE HOUR OF PENITENCE.

TO A WRONGDOER.

THE hour may come—and I would, even
to thee,

It should not be denied—when thy mean
soul—

Full of remorse for thy cruel past shall
be—

With fear—in thinking of thine Heavenly
goal!

O! shall thy footsteps reach it?—steps so long
Accustomed in such darkened paths to tread—

Thou, whose coarse lips have done so much of wrong,—
Dost thou remember what of old was said?

Go and ask pardon! more than that—
abase
Thy very soul in long, imploring prayer—
Nor dare to look into the wronged one's face,
Until the pardon lifts thy dull despair.

*Undo that bitter past thou can'st not —
nor
Bring back lost peace by either sigh, or
tear—
Thou can'st not alter Heaven's unchanging
law,
Nor tell thy penitence to Death's
cold ear.*

Ask pardon, then, of Heaven—for He,
alone,
Knows if thy grief be true, or false and
vain—
Both if for others' sakes thou would'st
atone,
Or for thine own peace, only—grace
obtain.

TO JEALOUSY.

AH! jealousy—thy bitter tongue can reach
The souls that least believe in thy vile
heart,
In the cruel lessons that thy lips can
teach,
In all things playing a dark, hateful
part.

Thou givest a false colour to each scene,
Through which thou passest, in the
summer hours—
And whereso'er thy burning step hath
been
Men watch the fading of their fairest
flowers.

What is thy sister to thee, if her eyes
Are brighter, fairer than shall seem
thine own?

Thou—that can'st poison even her food
with lies—
In place of bread would'st proffer her
a stone!

And what thy brother! — if around his
path
Lies the fair realm where thou shalt
never rest—
Thou art, then, as a serpent by his
hearth,
Or as a poisoned arrow in his breast.

Yes! he who harbours thee shall know, at
last,
Thy fair skin but conceals the tiger's
clutches—
Thou art to life as a cold, eastern blast,
That blights each wholesome blossom
that it touches!

A STAIN TOO DARK.

No Christian's heart was in those acts
of hers,
Of which but lips of bitter pain may
tell—
There are some whom no charity deters
From giving to another pangs of
Hell—

Those acts were blackening for all future
days;
Henceforth one thinks not of her as a
mother,
But a self-seeking spirit, who betrays
No feeling for the anguish of another—

All else of vile we might forget—this—
never!—
It leaves to all eternity its trace,—
A blot remains and shall remain for
ever—
One that no after care can now erase.

Go! let thy harsh heart soften, but no
more
Come thou near us—ah! touch us not
again!
No faith of earlier times can'st thou
restore,
Much—much have we forgotten—not
this stain!

I might all shades of thy coarse past dismiss,
 Let moss of memory safely hide each mark,
 But whatsoever was forgiven—*this*
 Hath left a stain that rests — for *ever*
 dark!

THE BLACK PAST.

To —.

EVEN did'st thou ask forgiveness—at the last—

Even had'st thou boldness left a grace to ask,
 What *can* wipe out that bitter, hateful past,
 That even to pardon is so hard a task.

Hast thou the power to bring back life once more

To the sweet flower thou brutally hast crushed?
 The bloom upon the peach can'st thou restore?—

The dew — that from the rose-leaf thou hast brushed?

That snowdrop thou hast trampled in the dirt,

On whose white leaves no purity now lingers—
 The lily whose fair petals thou hast hurt,
 By even one passing touch of thy rude fingers—

The dove, that, slaughtered, in thy path-way lies—

Its broken heart, beneath the blighted grass—

While o'er it sweep the rough winds of cold skies,

Where strange or careless footsteps only pass—

Ah! when thou *life* can'st give to these again—

And so obliterate from memory's slate
 All records of long agonies of pain—

Ah! *then* shalt thou mark out the words
 —*Too late!*

HEAVEN SAID—OF OLD—

HEAVEN said, of old, that with the Liar,
 thou
 Shalt not associate—hate defiles his brow—
 For malice, envy and all evil things
 Hide under the dark shade of Satan's wings.

And when by "evil doers" thou art troubled,

Thy time is scant for work, *thy labour*
doubled—

They throw, moreover, dust into thine eyes,

And blemish all things sweet with foulest lies—

Thy paths, O God! are not *man's* paths—
 and when

We lift to Thee the eyes so stained with tears,

We pray, but after the dull ways of men,
 Whose senses catch no roll of coming years—

And when our rash steps traverse the wrong track,

Vainly their marks we labour to efface—
 To man is not permitted *to go back—*

And seek once more, a lost, beloved place—

The flowers that once he planted there are dead—

Or flowering but in Thy fair land, O God!
 He searches, but to find their petals shed—
 Even on those paths he once so gaily trod!

SO COME NOT NEAR—.

So come not near—the hour is growing late—

Breathe not upon our path thy loathsome breath—

Our pilgrimage draws near the final gate
 By which shall stand the silent form of death!

We would that all dark figures—like thine own—

Engraved on Memory's too fatal slate,

Were not on lines hewn out of slabs of
stone,
By which dark, watchful forms for ever
wait!

Ah! in the records of a life shall man
Full many a sad, heart-breaking story
read,
Of many a brilliant, yet frustrated plan,—
How numbers fail—but one —or two
—succeed.

Heaven keeps these records—sealed with
one Great Seal—
O'er which some—lost—have mocked—
with brazen shame—
These — some day — may an awful voice
reveal—
These—some day—may an awful voice
proclaim.

On earth that voice falls on a deadened
ear—
Man thinks but seldom of his future
home—
And disbelieves—the while he trifles here—
The last great call—to earth—shall ever
come!

A "SMALL" QUESTION!

WERE but the universe placed in the
hand
Of man—how would he use it in these
hours?—
Would he but turn to *best* account the
land—
Apply—to only *noble* aims—his powers?

Would he be kinder to his fellow man—
Swift to exhort — unwilling to dis-
grace?
Or would it rather be his harsher plan
To punish—not to pardon, in the race?

Oh! would he be more merciful—more
ready
To look with eyes of pity on the weak,—
Give help, give substance, to reward the
steady—
Encouragement, the kindest, to the
meek?

Nay!—we—judging from what one sees
and hears—
Deem that man's judgments had a
thousand times
Been harsher—through past centuries of
years—
Harsher than Heaven's, upon his fellow's
crimes!

Yes! rather far would we be judged by
God—
Even though not always calmly one
submits—
Than to the creature born of earthly sod—
Who deals what punishment *his temper*
fits!

LUCIFER'S REPRESENTATIVE!

Go! thou vile creature — cursed these
thousand years—
Dressed in an outer skin so sleek and
fair—
Thou cause of oft our saddest, sharpest
tears,
Of wounds whose anguish links us with
despair.

Hast thou not stung me? Aye—I know
thee well!
Long since our poets of thy malice
sang—
And of no sharper poisons can they tell
Than poisons that exude from thy sharp
fang.

Slipping into some household corner—
where
No light may fall upon thy spotted
skin—
Hiding thyself from wholesome light and
air,
The personation, as thou art, of sin!

Go! thou vile creature—come not in our
sight,
And cross no scene on which may rest
our eyes—
'Tis sad to look out on the glorious night
And see *thee*, crawling under Heaven's
fair skies!

Herd with the newts and toads, and these
alone!—
Thine evil skin no more amongst us
shed—
Go—creep beneath the dismal churchyard
stone,
Where things are of the evil, or the
dead—

To see thee “twisting” in the wholesome
light,
Might make the fairest cheek turn cold
and pale!—
Hide and for ever in foul haunts of
night—
Nor on *our* pathway leave thy loath-
some trail!

A WARNING!

SEE’ST thou not where thy footsteps lead,
O fool?

Art thou not conscious of *some* thought
of fear?—

Know’st thou not thou art even “Satan’s
tool,”—

To use a phrase to reach the common
ear!

Is he not but the wolf, dressed as the
sheep!—

Doth still that clothing cheat thy silly
gaze!

Art ignorant!—that thy steps are on *that*
steep

Whose slow incline but leads to darker
ways!

Dost thou not understand—that those mean
eyes,

Whose look thou art acquiring, are but
those

That shine with vicious, hypocritic lies,
That shed but falsehood’s tears o’er
other’s woes!

That coarse-lipped mouth, dropping such
oily things!

Whose every utterance will a sufferer
fear—

Whose words can even inflict such hellish
stings,

They wound for ever a poor listener’s
ear—

Go! save thyself in time—turn thou away
The steps that wander in a foul twi-
light—

Or thou wilt lose for ever the sweet day,
For the deep shadows of the murkiest
night!

REFLECT!

GONE from thy life and gone for ever—
more!

The opportunity was once thine own—
Then slighted, cast aside, or hurried o’er—
And for that waste thou can’st not now
atone.

Here in this troubled, fretful, anxious life,
We often run an evil, selfish race—

Nor for the friend, the mother—husband
—wife—

Shall it be given their footsteps to re-
trace.

Oh! the neglected moment! what *had*
been,—

Save for our recklessness!—we wildly
cry—

Look back!—and if thy memory be green,
Thy past shall be remembered with a
sigh.

To-day is thine, to-morrow who can tell
What storms may cross the heaven that
now is clear!

To-day we meet—to-morrow comes fare-
well,

To-day we lightly trust—to-morrow fear.

See that thou use it well—each passing
hour—

Neither be careless, neither overstrain—
Only the present shall be in thy
power—

Nothing that passes is thine own again!

THE MODERN LUCIFER.

NOR that dark Power that Milton drew of
old—

Not Lucifer—the daring and the bold—
Who, with audacious courage, lurid eye,
Held his unholy war with Heaven, on
high.

The Satan that on earth you now shall
meet,
With meanest pitfalls oft waylays your
feet—
He will mislead you by the poorest wiles,
And cheat you with the vulgarest of
smiles!

And he can don a very robe of white—
His lips are swollen with unuttered spite—
His modest eyes are often on the ground—
Though *sometimes* — gleaming craftily
around!—

He nothing hath of savage in his mien,
He often in a "good" man's home is
seen!—
And some declare, still often, hath pos-
sessed
The strongholds of a pious woman's
breast!

His lips drop honey and his words entice—
He hath an almost *over*-dread of vice!!
He treads the footpaths of the good and
wise,
And sadly o'er the world's black sins he
sighs—

He will confess to you, this world that
tries you
So woefully, is filled with worse than
weakness—
And even in most dulcet tones advise you
To walk the paths of purity and meek-
ness!—

His brow seems often as the brow of saint—
He seems above the world and not *below*
it!—
His very sanctity *himself* will paint,
And by its smartest colours you may know
it!—

He bids you walk uprightly in *his* paths—
He speaks of all the good with tender
praise—
He scatters money round the poor man's
hearths—
He is a benefactor in all ways!—

He gives the weakly-vain his "broader
views"—
A silly woman with "strong thought" en-
dues—

He strengthens all her worse—her vainer
powers,
And he upholds her in her weaker hours—

Open defiance he dares not to hurl
At heaven, his red eyes have a vicious
slant—
His mean lips often wear an evil curl,
His lower tones are soft and full of cant—

O! you may see him in a thousand forms,
With mincing steps that yet are steps of
pride—
O! you shall meet him in the hour of
storms,
And when your enemies are by your
side!—

The feeble are his instruments, most
often,
The weak of heart and the unstable
brains—
And if you think that *woe* his heart could
soften,
Go to! you are a fool for all your pains!

Aye! 'tis the weak who fall into his
clutch,—
He is not moved by piercing cries nor sobs
Of wildest agony, nor with *one* touch
Of sympathy his cold heart ever throbs!

THE VISION OF LIFE, OR DARKER HOURS.

AH Life! thou art a vision in the air—
O Life! thou art a phantom and a scare!

The crocus, newly born,
Lifts up, in April dawn,
Its orange petals to the smiling sky—
Yet, when the winds blow cold,
Its tender leaves refold—
And clasp each other closely—but to die!

Yon star, whose brilliant rays,
Pierce through heaven's misty
haze,
Looks down on mortals from its lofty
throne—
Yet may our watchful eyes
Behold it quit the skies,
And leave its sister-lights to shine alone!

Ah Life! thou art a vision in the air—
O Life! thou art a phantom and a scare!

Fruits ripen to decay,
Joys come—to pass away—
All hopes and all ambitions spring in
vain—
Despite our prayers, our tears,
The joys of earlier years
Return not to our longing hearts again!

The waves, in wild unrest,
Lift up each snowy crest,
As if to reach the blue heavens bending
o'er—
Then, as the storms arise,
And lightning cleaves the skies,
Wave after wave breaks fiercely on the
shore—

Ah Life! thou art a vision in the air—
O Life! thou art a phantom and a scare.

And thou—oh! vainest man—
Who liv'st to plot—to plan—
As if thy home would be for ever here—
A little time—no more!—
Thy puny labours o'er—
Men bear thee slowly homeward on thy
bier.

THE VOICE OF DISCONTENT!

THE voice of God from earth hath passed
away,
And man remains to brood o'er earth's
despair—
There comes no echo ringing out by day,
There sounds no whisper on the mid-
night air—

We seem to hear no more the Living
Word,
Neither its anger nor rebuke we fear—
The note of scoffing unbelief is heard,
And scarcely grates upon the modern
ear—

And Evil stalks through the fog-laden
land,
With reckless footstep and unblushing
face—

She touches all things with a blighting
hand—
Her ear is deaf to cries for love and
grace—

The heavy atmosphere seems only stirred
At times by warlike echoes on the wind—
The march of hatred's legions may be
heard,
And Infidelity lags not behind—

And Murder boldly takes its loathsome
place—
And keeps it still, upon the world's
broad girth—
And Avarice shall run her ancient race,
And darkness yet is heavy on the
earth! ..

A WEARY SIGH—

(FROM ONE—not A PHILOSOPHER!)

No—friend! I am not mad, but worn with
strife—
With seeking ever for that nobler life
Wherein no man shall more endure the
pain
Of knowing Love and Charity are vain!

No—friend! I am not mad! although mine
eyes
Look longingly from earth to purer skies,
From lands of war, from regions most
unblessed,
To realms that are of holiness—of rest.

No—friend! I am not mad,—that I would
reach
A sphere *where men shall practise what
they preach,*
Where some — we pray — another crown
shall win
Than that attained by earthly war and
sin.

I am not "mad," as once they said of
Paul!

I am not mad, that I can hear the call
Of many broken hearts, from many
homes,
Implore the peace that—earthward—never
comes!

I am not mad, that I have yearned to
leave
The world where few rejoice—where many
grieve—
That I would ask of Heaven to break the
chain
That binds me here—to free me once
again!

I am not mad! 'tis rather that we seem
To me to live on earth a fevered dream—
For ever striving for the taste of joys
That Death, by one sharp blow of his,
destroys!

I am not mad! my friends—I say again—
I only weary of Life's galling chain—
I only sigh that toil and pain were o'er,
And I—one of Life's multitudes *no more!*

EVER UNSOLVED.

THE Mystery of Life!—ah! many seek
To solve it—yet but waste each anxious
hour—
Only of baffled efforts still to speak—
God yet withholds the reading of His
power.

Shall it be *ever* on this earth that God
Keeps unrevealed Eternity's great
plan!—
The wherefore Life shall spring up from
the sod—
The wherefore hope, or fear, shall enter
man—

Shall we know—*never*—wherefore cometh
Death,
And for what deeds of ours we pay the
toll—
The wherefore cometh Life's first,
wondrous breath—
The future—that awaits the unseen soul?

Aye!—know not what Eternity's dread
name
Doth mean—in the beginning, or—the
END!
Shall we know nor the glory, nor the
shame—
Nor what God's mystic words may com-
prehend?

Ah! hopeless speculation shall be here
Our future destiny!—it were too much
To enter, even in thought, the realms of
fear,
Or love—these mysteries man shall not
touch!

MUSINGS ON LIFE.

LIFE is no simple path of love and light,
The path we dream of in our early
days—
But often one of treachery and spite,
The eyes that mock—the mouth that but
betrays—
Filled with the vanity that seeks from man
The plaudits it affects to treat with
scorn,
Crossed by some tawdry, or ignoble plan,
In which Life's angel stands as one
forlorn—

God loveth not the "holy Pharisee!"—
Who holds himself as certain in the
race,
Asserts his vain eyes into Heaven can see,
As one for whom the angels keep his
place—

Who speaks with horror of his brother's
wars,
Scorns even the highest prizes they may
reach,
Maintains *his* ways, alone, are free from
flaws,
His *own* life as a pure, unspotted
peach—

The poorest outcast beggar by the road,
On whom some pittance such may have
bestowed,
But from whose touch he would have
turned aside,
May gain the prize to his mean grasp
denied!

A TWIN SISTER OF LOVE.

THOU hast a sister—a twin sister—cold
And pale, O Love! with eyes of sombre
hue—

Not ever young as thou—but grey—but old!

Whom Life, from even her earliest moments, knew.

Hate in thy fairest, brightest steps shall tread,

O Love! following thee through the wood and vale—

Even into the still regions of the dead—
And leaving everywhere her evil trail—

She is with thee in all thy many wars,
Through all the paths that thou on earth may'st trace—

She even walks beneath the pensive stars,
The light of Heaven upon her pallid face!

Thus ever near thee—Love—comes evil spite,

As a mean—writhing worm—a creature vile

Beyond description — shrinking from the light—

Too unsweet to bear daylight's searching smile.

She hides in all dark, all unsavoury places—

And shrinks from meeting openly men's eyes—

And if she follows man's most noble races
It often is in some Hell-bought disguise!

WHAT BITTER, EVIL SOULS WERE THEIRS!

OH! there is nothing thou can'st do, but they

Will something shameful of it find to say!
They cannot through thy woods their path-way take,

But they pretend that they have seen a snake!

They cannot even through thy meadows pass,

But they will find a viper in the grass!
Thou can'st not offer them a pear, a peach,

But they will find a wasp in all and each!

They see a blighted leaf in every rose,
To them a nettle in each flower-bed grows—

There is no spot so fragrant and so fair
But they will scent foul vapours in its air.

No brightness in thy life hath ever been
But they have thrown some shadow o'er the scene—

No joy seems ever in *thy* sky to dawn
But they have noted it, with hate and scorn.

There is no path of thine too pure and sweet

For them to trample on, with unclean feet!—

For them to seek to fill with evil cares!—
Ah, Heaven! what bitter, evil souls were theirs!

LIPS OF SATAN!

Lips that are vulgar, common, coarse and mean—

Between whose lines the truth is rarely seen—

That treat you to a thousand cunning wiles,
That never smile but with the falsest smiles—

Lips that can speak not of your smallest act

But in some hideous way distort a fact—
Lips that not lightly, but in fullest measure,

Will breathe a taint into your purest pleasure—

Lips that all lips of sweetness would disown—

Lips to whom truth seems strange, if not unknown—

Lips that one might call harder than a stone—

Lips to whom charity is all unknown—

Lips that are ruled not by Heaven's fifth great law—

But treat it with disdain and not with awe—

The law of truth—the law beneath whose rays

All things are clear to the discerning gaze—

Lips that shall utter not the lightest thing,
But it shall bear with it a bitter sting—
Whose very flattery is a poisoned sweet—
These devil's lips on earth, alas! we meet!

BELIEVE IT FOR THE BEST!

AH! yes! what poor, weak creatures one
hath known!

The lips that smiled, and yet—the heart
of stone!

The weak uncertainty of boastful feet—
The air of vanity, of huge conceit!

Would one had never met them!—yet the
earth

That grows so many plants of noble worth
Hath also soil but fit for *smutted* grain—
For things that cumber, not adorn, the
plain.

The evil and the good alternate here—
The cheery laughter and the grievous
tear—

The autumn and the spring—the heat—
the snow—

The winds that slumber and the winds that
blow—

Believe it for the best! — if one shall
grieve,
To learn that souls are vile and lips
deceive,

It leads one yet more gratefully to prize
Love's warm and noble heart and tender
eyes.

Nor should we value day but for the
night—

Esteem the fresh had we not known the
blight—

Rejoice in summer's ripeness—summer's
heat—

Had we not seen the march of winter's
feet!

WAS IT WORTH WHILE?

A QUESTION OFTEN ASKED TOO LATE.

NOT often, until life shall near its end,

In all its true significance, at last—

Yet all too late his follies to amend—

Man views, with sad, upbraiding eyes,
his past.

Was it worth while?—the troubled sinner
sighs,—

Was it worth while, to hate and blame
so much—

And learn only too late, how to be wise,
With all things earthly slipping from
our touch?—

Was it worth while—to seek the world's
poor praise,

Forsake the friend and court unworthy
foes,

Gather the poorest blossoms by our ways,
Only to know them worthless, at life's
close?—

Was it worth while—to hate with so much
hate,

To follow, with such bitterness of spite,
All who achieve a plan of greater weight,
Or shine more brightly, in the world's
keen sight?—

Only to feel at last, with dull despair,
Our hold upon the future growing
weak—

Until we, with rebellious groans, prepare—
Naked and strange, another world to
seek!

FOR SUCH WILL SEEM—

FOR such will seem to hold it as a glory
To drag back into sustenance and
light

Some bitter grief, or melancholy story,
That otherwise had passed from sound,
and sight.

And he, or she—it may be—Oh! *such*
creatures

Remind of fires, with sudden fuel re-
newed!—

A gleam of pleasure lightens up their
features,

As though with fresh vitality endued!—

Without compunction they will rob the
air

Of every breath of innocence and
truth—

And bring a cloud of doubt, or of despair,
To dull the budding faith of trusting
youth.

'Tis true that there *are* dark, unwholesome
skies

Where such may find an audience when
they speak,

And all these spiteful souls we would
advise,

Such foul and blasted realms as these
to seek!

There they may slander to their heart's
content!

And there their stories may be—free
and bold—

And one false whisper to such regions lent
Will bring increase a hundred,
thousand-fold!

HOW THEN?

How then shall man pass through this
Vale of Tears—

So named by some!—in tumults and in
wars?

Watching the rolling past of Earth's swift
years—

Or, through the summer night, the
march of stars?

Or holding out a calm and helpful hand,
To all who comfort, or wise counsels
need?—

Training up souls to fill the Better Land—
Binding the bitter wounds of Life that
bleed?

Strengthening the feeble, holding up the
weak—

Smoothing the paths that lead men to
their dead—

Encouraging the sorrowful and meek,
Teaching the little children how to
tread—

Surely such paths are sweeter, brighter,
than

The paths so many follow in this life—
Filled with the ruins of man's war with
man,—

With cries of women—vexed with peevish
strife—

Ah yes! these last are hardly worth the
time!—

A waste of love, of peace, of joy, of
power—

Far better listen to the hours that chime
From time's renewed, yet ever crumbling
tower!

And listening—count them wisely, as they
toll—

Remembering each one hath a tale to
tell—

Think as into far centuries they roll,
If for thy soul, those echoes shall be
well!

A "STIFF-NECKED" PEOPLE!

THERE is a heavy shadow on the land,
O God! a mocking spirit on Thy
earth—

Man is—some cry—no creature of Thy
hand—

A "cell"—a something of ephemeral
birth!—

Some sneer at even the mention of Thy
name—

And look up as in mockery—in Thy
face—

Others presume Thyself,—Thy laws—to
blame,

As one neglecting Thy created race!

Oh! still a "stiff-necked" people, as was
said

Of old—this people of our later times—
They walk but in the footsteps of their
dead—

Again enact the same wars—tumults—
crimes—

Oh! still is man vain, foolish, headstrong,
weak—

The meanest crown his poor ambition
serves,

A creature on whom Righteousness would
wreak

The punishment that he so well
deserves!

*Such is the cry of him who cannot gaze
Below the shadows lying on the grass—*

Not only for no clearer light he prays,
But mocks the stars that o'er his path
shall pass!

FORGOTTEN MAN!

SOME say Thou hast forgotten now Thy earth,

O God! that it is wicked as of old—
That even as in the first years of his birth,

The paths of man are arrogant and bold.

This generation "seeketh for a sign"—

It groweth daily in its unbelief—
And trusts no more in that great power of Thine—

Though lost in troubles, prays not for relief!

When will Thy mighty voice this world arouse

To thoughts of love, O God! to thoughts of fear?—

From apathy, or still more vile carouse,—
So stay it in its frivolous career?

Thy words to some seem echoes of a dream,

Of the rich fancies of a fevered hour,
Past histories but fabled records seem,
Of man's first dazzling, overwhelming power.

Aye! in the passing of his life's brief hour

Man mocketh at all strength beyond his own,

Vain of his puny labours—ah! how vain;
To him all greater truths remain unknown!

BUT IF THE BETTER SOUL
SURVIVES!

ALAS! the burden of our "tale" of bricks,

The heavy locks upon each prison-gate!—

Alas! the knavish and uncivil tricks—

The counsel and the help that come too late!—

Alas! the sinners that beset our way—

The chill—the heavy tempest and the shade—

Alas! the early closing of the day,
The pitfalls that our enemies have made!—

Alas! the hateful falsehoods—bitter lies—

The evil meanings vilely they construe—

Alas! the shadows falling o'er their eyes—

The hideous visions that distort their view!—

Alas! the heart that willingly believes

That vicious signs *must* mark their brother's brow—

The souls whose innate malice most deceives—

Whose eyes are blind and yet they know not how!—

Something of passing joy is in their lives,

For malice hath a pleasure of her own—

But if the better soul, O God! survives,

Gloomy the hours through which it must atone!

MAN REPEATS HIMSELF!

"The aspect of physical nature, the conditions of the human heart, are much the same now as in the golden days of the early Renaissance, and afford now, as then, an endless source of inspiration to the painter and to the poet."—CHARLES L. EASTLAKE, *Times*, November 19th, 1883.

MAN loveth still, as in the Old-World times,

His heart beats with like passion, or—
Despair,

He marks the earth with glory, or with crimes,

Now fills with sunlight — now with war's fierce glare—

History repeats herself,—Nature returning
In certain hours, to some far earlier phase

Of her existence, even as once more learning

Forgotten lessons of her ruder days—

The shadows yet re-gather of the past,

Confounding both the fool and the o'er-wise—

Man's mind is still by doubts and fears o'ercast,

As mists form and re-form before his eyes—

Life is a mystery even now, as when
It first revealed itself in throes of pain,*
Earth yet is peopled by dim-visioned men,
Who her enigmas seek to read in vain—

Man dreams his savage brother is re-
claimed,
At times, and then would gladly kinship
own—
Then comes the hour when he shall feel
ashamed,
Once more, of the slow progress he hath
shown—

Simple religion—pure and undefiled—
Some now exchange for one of greater
show!—

Others assume the ignorance of a child,
And boast of knowing that—*they nothing
know!*

OUR EARTH, O HEAVEN!

OUR Earth, O Heaven!—is not an earth of
peace,
But one that wars, disputes and factions
sway—
An earth whereon the wicked rarely
“cease
From troubling” — even through each
toiling day!

Where man must bare a strong arm for the
fight,
Should innocence lie fainting at his
feet—
Where he needs battle long, who wars for
right—
And where the breath of life is rarely
sweet.

A world of loathsome greed, a world of
spite—
Wherein great Evil plays no trivial
part—
Where words of calumny can cruelly
blight—
And malice seeks to stab thee to the
heart!

The practised huntsman, hunting down his
prey,
By love of sport, or by ambition fired—

Could track not more determinedly thy
way,
Than doth a foe, whom hatred hath
inspired!

Ah, yes—*inspired*, but not by heaven!—
by one
Who loves the joy and fairness of this
earth—
No! but by him who dreads the open
sun,—
Whose ear rejects the sweeter sounds of
mirth.

That secret foe will hide him in the night!
Not where the moon can shine upon his
face—

He dares not come out into keener light,
Lest men too easily his foot-prints trace!

His eyes to passers-by indifferent seem,
No more—yet eyes the victim compre-
hends!—

Cold, pitiless—they have an evil gleam
Within their glance, as on his way he
wends!—

An enemy that will not let thee rest—
Whose hatred is untiring to the end—
The slanderer who reaches at your breast,
And stabs you, in the seeming of a
friend!

Yet for some purpose—hidden from our
eyes,
God sends these vipers into many a
plain,—
Through many a valley where His sunlight
lies—
And *why*—man knows not—prays to
know, in vain!

AH, YES! THY GIFT OF LIFE IS AS A DREAM—

AH, yes! Thy gift of life is as a dream
O God! whose hours are few, of peace
and light—
The flowers of morn may catch the glad
sunbeam,
Yet often wither ere the hour of night—

* See “The Mystery of Pain.” By James Hinton.

The humble daisy looks, with cheerful eye,
O'er the green, tender blades of spring-
ing grass—

Yet—as the storms of March o'ercloud the
sky,
Its life even, with their bitter breath may
pass—

The holy lily, with its brow of white,—
Its perfume, ever delicate and sweet—
Struck by the north wind's fierce and
bitter blight,
Fades slowly — surely — dying at our
feet—

The evening star that meets our thoughtful
gaze,
Sinks pensively upon the ocean shore—
Or takes to other lands its tender rays—
The rays that shall be for *our* eyes no
more—

The fragile leaf, whose vigour hath been
sapped,
Falls with the autumn's cold, unfeeling
breath—
Our daily lives with mystic lines are
mapped
By the unsympathising hand of death!—

The thoughtless child on life looks gladly
out—
Its cheek is dimpled and its forehead
flushed—
And now we hear its glad and merry
shout—
And now we listen and its voice is
hushed!—

Yet—Heavenly Love—if thou art with us
still—
If in all passing sounds Thy voice is
heard,—
No grief—no anguish—aye! no mortal ill
Shall cloud with dark distrust Thy
glorious words.

O God! be with us in all life's sad hours—
Lighten our pathway—give us healthy
breath—
We know Thou art the ruler of all
powers,—
That Thou—Thou only art the King of
death!

AH, GOD! THY WORLD!—

Ah, God! Thy world — where sorrow
chiefly reigns—

Yet full of myriad changing lights and
beauties—

Ah, God! the darkness on Thine earthly
plains;

Our griefs and troubles and conflicting
duties!—

When will the sunlight rest upon the
land!—

When will there be less darkness, more
clear light!

Shall all things yield to them the strongest
hand—

And Power still arbitrate — deposing
Right!

Shall man still show his brother-man more
hate

Than love, and woman's malice never
cease!

And looking on this—our uncertain fate,
Shall we, on earth, have never rest, nor
peace?

Thy creatures! — shall they never raise
their eyes

To see the coming of a brighter dawn—
And learn how to be patient, thoughtful,
wise—

Not *burning* with reproaches—anger—
scorn!

Will they not look to their own faulty
ways,

Rather than to their brothers'!—shall the
blind—

In modern times, as in the world's old
days—

To *others* teach the *road to Thee* to
find!

Alas! Thy world! where sorrow chiefly
reigns!—

Yet full of myriad changing lights and
beauties—

Ah, God! the darkness on Thine earthly
plains—

Our griefs and troubles and conflicting
duties!

DAY AFTER DAY THEY

MOAN.

DAY after day they moan—
 Believing each one, in his inmost heart,
 That none shall ever for their sins atone—
 Nor play, hereafter, any nobler part!

So—sadly—they complain!—
 Still for their ranks they gather full
 recruits—
 For much on earth that man can do seems
 vain,
 If it shall rest for *him* to reap the fruits!

And truly each may fret
 His little life, in thinking of its mean-
 ness—
 In spite of all its sought-for pleasures, yet
 A very life of emptiness and leanness!

We nothing ever bring
 To earth and nothing take from it, they
 sigh—
 Only in death a load of misery fling
 Back in the face of Life's unfeeling
 sky!

A strange and dull belief!
 As weak and feeble as it now is old—
 As though Life's incompleteness were a
 grief
 It gave men some strange ecstasy to
 hold!

ART THOU SO WEARY?

To —.

"ART thou so weary? Yet thy life may
 pass
 From earth long ere one hair of thine
 is grey—
 Earth may be even as a looking-glass,
 From which the breath flies, in a single
 day!

"Nay—less! even in a moment, and it
 were
 Wiser to see the beauties of God's land,
 Than yield to the mere dulness of despair,
 And hide thy tired eyes with a weary
 hand.

"Life's hours are few, at last, and it may
 be
 Those leaving earth shall see it never
 more,—

Even from the far shores of Eternity;
 Thy time allotted—if once served, is o'er!

"The world itself, is a broad, spreading
 space,
 Filled with a countless throng — from
 Pole to Pole—
 And surely thou shalt find in it *some* trace
 Of beauty—glory—love—to cheer thy
 soul!

"Thou wilt not sojourn on earth's surface
 long!—
 Thy hour will come, thy journey nears
 its end—
 Tread it, O traveller! with a purpose
 strong,
 Time marches on—the shades of night
 descend!"

LIFE'S MORE EARLY LESSONS.

IN life's more early lessons far too much
 One feels an adverse breath upon the
 skin!—
 And he needs "put his fortune to the
 touch"
 And brace his nerves, who on the course
 would win.

Lightly be not discouraged — though is
 found
 The poisoned sting in the sweet-singing
 bee—
 The rank and evil weeds on sunny
 ground—
 The rotting, yet bright apples on thy
 tree—

Cast yet thy "bread upon the waters"—
 thou
 Shalt find it "after many days"—the
 skies
 Of life are mixed—now sorrow marks thy
 brow,
 Now happiness gleams in thy very eyes.

Leaves of the autumn shiver on thy
 trees—
 Yet—though thy skies be gloomy—over-
 cast—

Thy vessels — venturing on the stormy
seas,
May in our sheltering harbours rest at
last.

This is the life of earth, that all must
meet—
Treasure its joys, nor yet its griefs
forget—
Gather the rose, while yet the rose is
sweet,
The hours are flitting and the sun shall
set.

DEEP—LOW AND STRONG.

DEEP, low and strong—
And yet by even the leaves of autumn
stirred—
By ears that listen patiently and long,
Another than the voice of man is
heard!

Too weak are some—
Too feeble — that low-lying voice to
hear
Their ears are ever dull, their senses
dumb—
No sound they catch, save thunder,
pealing near—

No! there are those
That only catch the world's shrill upper
song—
Not the hard utterance of its fuller woes—
The hoarser ones of suffering and of
wrong—

Souls without power
To understand, in truth, Life's deeper
sounds—
The weary complaints of many a wasted
hour—
The moans with which the air of earth
abounds—

Hearts whose hard walls
Are pierced but rarely by the wildest
cry—
That cannot feel a sufferer's fainter calls,
That never echo back a dying sigh!

Therefore shall they
Stay not for thy stern voice, O Heaven!
but tread
With rude, unheeding steps the dreary
way,
That leads them downward to the hope-
less dead.

A VILE HEART.

HE sees one, passing — on his onward
road—
Meeting at first, a fair and smiling
day—
And heaps upon those shoulders all the
load
Of evil he can gather on his way—

Yes! he would lay upon another's back,
His own mean sins and failings — no
light weight!—
He places roughest flint-stones on his
track,
And locks the lock of every pleasant
gate—

And if the traveller's flesh is scarred and
torn,
And thorns have run into the bleeding
feet,
He points it out with mocking sneer and
scorn,
To any passers-by whom he may
meet—

He proffers help with seeming, kindly
haste,
He offers his cold left hand with a
smile—
Even though a dagger in his breast he
placed,
He kept the weapon *well concealed*, the
while—

Then told the world—"All I could do most
kind
And helpful in this matter I have done!
But there are those, you see, who *will*
be blind
And who into Life's pitfalls always
run!"

ENTER HERE NO MORE.

TO A SLANDERER.

Go! thou vile tattler—enter here no more—

This entrance is not to the poor refused,
Only to thee and thine—whose evil store
Of lies hath all of friendship's claims
abused.

Here come not!—nor shall enter they,
again,
Who swallowed greedily those lies of
thine—
All things thou touchest have an evil
stain,
And if they shine — *'tis not by heaven
they shine!*

Thou hast brought endless evil, vicious
things
To twist before us, in the darker
night—
That creep out, under shade of Satan's
wings,
And whereso'er they crawl see men a
blight!

Therefore come thou not near us—enter
not
A door no more re-opened, in these
hours—
This is a tranquil and flower-sweetened
spot—
Where such as thou have neither claims,
nor powers.

Go—and amend—*this* good we wish thee
ever!
Long as thou liv'st it may not be too
late,
Thy bonds, however strong, with sin to
sever,
So enter still, Repentance's sad gate.

A VAIN CRY.

"HEAR me, O Keeper of the Holy
Gate!—
Hear me, although I come to Thee so
late—

"Truly—beyond all others is my claim—
My brow is stained by neither sin nor
shame,
I walked no paths the rich and stately
trod,
Nor wandered downwards—and away from
God—

"Hear me, O Keeper of the Holy Gate!—
Hear me, although I come to Thee so
late—

"From all the sinful world I turned
aside—
I shared not in its pomp and vulgar
pride—
I trod not in its giddy, foolish ways—
I went not to its parties—balls—and
plays!—

"Hear me, O Keeper of the Holy Gate!—
Hear me, although I come to thee so
late—

"Show and Society—I loved them not—
But visited the cotter in his cot—
Talked little with the rich, but taught
the poor
The Right—nor turned a beggar from my
door—

"Hear me, O Keeper of the Holy Gate!—
Hear me, although I come to thee so
late."

THE ANSWERING VOICE.

"YET not from idols hast thou turned
aside—
Thy heart glowed not with Charity, but
Pride—
That way—by thee deemed heavenly—and
secure—
Was neither holy, steadfast—clean, nor
pure—

"Oft have thy lips betrayed another's
name,
Cast at the sinless the rude stones of
blame—
Wrung with injustice a poor sufferer's
heart
And made its fleshly wounds more sharply
smart—

"A parent's griefs to thee were ever as
nought—
*Whate'er thine own they had no
meekness taught—*
Thine own shortcomings thou would'st oft
excuse—
Yet not the same pleas for another use—

"This Holy Gate that now so late ye
seek,
Is opened for the humble and the meek—
Soothers of others' sufferings, pains, and
woes—
To such as ye—alas!—*This Gate shall
CLOSE!*"

THE SLANDERER—FOILED BY LOVE!

FAITHFUL wert thou — pure soul — the
slanderer's dart,
Red with the life-blood of another's heart,
Touched not, harmed not — but as in-
nocuous fell,
As though it had not even been aimed
from Hell!

Things of the very darkest, foulest hue,
Thou with thy sweet and placid eyes
could'st view
With something borrowed from the world
above—
Eyes of forgiveness—though not eyes of
love!

For love can never be for evil felt!—
She who contritely unto God hath knelt
May hope to be forgiven—she, alone—
Pardon is wasted on the heart of stone!

Forgive thine enemy, though still thy
foe—
But shun his purlieus—for the serpent's
way,
The leopard's tracks are paths that lead
below,—
Not to the broad light of the heavenly
day.

The unrepentant sinner God's own voice
Denounces—he *himself* must humble first
To him he hath offended—and his choice
Lies between this and that of being
cursed!

RETURNED TO HEAVEN.

THOU wert my favourite, and none thought
it wrong—
For thou wert loved of all, thou heart
of gold!
Thou wert so merciful, withal so strong,
All saw thee calm, none ever called thee
cold!

Thou wert so mindful of all others' woes—
In all times so considerate in thy ways—
Ah! so unselfish! and yet not of those
Who air their charities for others' praise!

Yes—so forgiving—with no mock pre-
tence
Of figuring as a saint, for which some
strain—
And always full of such calm, wholesome
sense—
In nothing ever selfish, careless, vain—

Gentle and sweet, yet with a lofty brain,
That comprehended much and was too
deep
Too wise, too broadly thoughtful, to be
vain—
One whose sweet memory Love must
ever weep.

Ah, wherefore did'st thou leave us! save
that earth
Was scarce a dwelling for a soul so
sweet—
Too pure, too holy from its earliest birth
To walk o'er long this world of weary
feet!

YES! HARD AND COLD—

YES! hard and cold,
The hearts one sometimes meets amidst
the toil
Of varied life within God's human fold—
Nor all amongst the workers of the
soil!

Kind eyes had smiled
The worn brows of some weary ones to
meet,
Knowing how often soft words have be-
guiled
The very sufferings of the bleeding feet!

They know not,—they—
 Who walk on earth's more level surface,
 —how
 The storms beset the summer's calmest
 day,
 And rude winds leave their scars upon
 the brow.

They cannot hear
 The voice of grief, veiled by some care-
 less word—
 From them is hidden, oft, the starting
 tear,
 Knowing their hearts would be but
 lightly stirred.

Their eyes perceive
 Not the still clouds with which our griefs
 we hide,
 Nor yet how we to silent darkness cleave,
 With pride that yet may be a noble
 pride!

LATE LESSONS.

'Tis late in life we learn, alas! to know
 The false—the true, the staunch friend,
 and the foe—
 Yes! late in life are many sad truths
 learnt—
 And many wooden idols sternly burnt.

We see with less bewildered eyes! and,
 strong
 From sorrow, note where lay a cheat so
 long—
 Learn that apparent faith was falsehood—
 eyes
 Of snaky friendship shining with their
 lies!

Learn that a poisoned weed will often
 trail
 O'er summer's scented flowers, and that
 the veil
 Of deadly mists lies heavy on the lands
 That have been tilled by but unfaithful
 hands.

Ah! learn of a betrayer's lips—the small
 And petty motives ruling many paths—
 The boasted *noble* climbing and — the
fall!
 The slanders uttered around *saintly*
 hearths!

Lessons we learn but painfully and slowly,
 That yet are even priceless in their
 worth;—
 To separate the evil from the holy
 Is ever man's recurrent task on earth.

MUSING—

AYE!—far away, in memory's narrowed
 sky,
 The many phantoms rest—of years gone
 by—
 Yet—even as though their shapes by fire
 are drawn,
 One sees them in dark night or wintry
 morn—

Yonder behold a mean and crouching form
 Of one who fled from you in days of
 storm,
 That never stood up in the grace of light,
 Save when the winds were still, the
 heavens were bright—

Yonder note those whose dull, but spiteful
 eyes,
 Await the deepening of cloud-laden skies—
 Who stab beneath the tempest's gathering
 veils,
 That none may tell of *them*, abhorrent
 tales!—

And here an unsweet group, whose jarring
 song
 Grows, as the daylight wanes, more
 coarsely strong!—
 They fill a tuneful ear with grim despair,
 Their gibes and taunts ring loudly on the
 air—

But here stands—calmly—a strong, daunt-
 less form,
 His arm upraised to stay the angry
 storm—
 To still the clangour, the discordant
 strain—
 That shall disturb the silent wood and
 plain—

Slowly sings down the shrill, unwholesome
 blast—
 Sweet voices bitter ones have stilled, at
 last—
 Grim hate is driven back—the tale is
 told—
 Only—alas! the years of life are old!

A TRUTH OF EARTH.

NOTHING in life returns — her wasted hours,

Lost opportunities are ours no more—
Life comes not back to the once withered flowers—

Nor the wrecked vessel to its native shore.

Nothing in life returns—the broken trust
Is never ours again, through all our days,

The peach that hath been trodden in the dust

Makes not the traveller pause upon his ways—

Nothing in life returns—if souls have lied,
We trust them never more, but let them go—

Paths once so near are separated wide,
And bitter rivers shall between them flow.

Nothing in life returns—the lover scorned
Shall keep no more the faith he had of old—

He whom hath wisdom but too often warned

Shall wait in vain to have the tale re-told—

Nothing in life returns — nay! Spring comes back,

With buds of green and songs of tender mirth—

Yet bloom not the same flowers upon her track—

To gladden eyes that are no more of earth!

O CARE!—DULL CARE!

O CARE!—dull care!—thou in thy silk attire,

With thy lined brow—thine eyes of smouldering fire,

Thy often trembling hands and weary feet,
Thy voice now harsh—now feeble—rarely sweet—

Thou art in many stately homes the guest—

Treated with courtesy—fed on the best!—

Aye, care! — dull care! — full many a strange tale

They tell of thee, in voices hushed and low—

And such as make the brightest cheeks turn pale

And lose for ever life's more healthy glow—

Until earth melancholy seems—and grey—
And all its fairer colours pass away.

Aye, care!—dull care!—as many know too well,

Not only on the poor are made thy calls,

Alas! how many weary hearts can tell,
Thou also oft art seen in royal halls—

Few are the doors at which thou wilt not knock,

To find them, at thy gloomy voice, unlock!

LOVE AND GRIEF.

To those that love, God also giveth grief—
The fairest flower that in thy garden grows

Shall often show the earliest blighted leaf,
When the fierce wind from northern climates blows!

What are my foes to me, O God! if Thou
Shalt keep for me the true and tender eyes

Of love—the trustful and the steady brow,
The lips for ever faithful—honest—wise!

Voices of cold malignity ring back—
Even from the fairest palace of my past—

Follow, like “sabbath witches,” on my track,

Raging and shrieking, like a hell-sent blast—

Through all, *another* voice rings on mine ear,
And, though so gentle, rises far above

All evil echoes—passionate, yet clear,
The voice of Heaven on earth—the voice of love!

It may be needful thou dost turn aside
From where the serpent glistens in the sun—

Or pause to "bruise its head"—the world
is wide—
Go on thy ways—thy work is yet not
done!

NO ONE BUT GOD—

FORGIVE! but take NOT back unto thy
heart

The base—nor place him by thy hearth
once more,
Lest he, again, shall launch his poisoned
dart,
Or seek to stab thee—even as before!

Forego his punishment—and harm him
not

As he hath harmed thee, though his
sins were great—

Yet—let him share no more thine earthly
lot,
Neither re-enter through thine open
gate!

I speak but here of those who, doing
wrong,

See not their sins and no repentance
feel—

And who again would bind thee with the
thong

Of hypocritic lies—with vicious zeal—

Not of the Penitent! of one who says,
"I wronged thee greatly—greatly I
repent!"

Aye! not of him who for forgiveness prays,
He should from no man's entrances be
sent!

No one but God can e'er the sinner's place
Restore to him—this lies in no man's
power—

For thereon rests dark slander's bitter
trace,

Meeting thine eyes until Life's latest
hour.

THE HEART HIDES ITS WORST BITTERNESS.

THE heart hides its worst bitterness, O
God!—

Thou knowest all the truth and only
Thou—

The lost hopes hidden in the earth's cold
sod,
The lines that mark the dead man's
silent brow!

Under the earth, for countless fathoms
deep,

Bury men records of sin — anguish —
shame—

Despair for ever shall her records keep,
And yet for ever fan the lurid flame.

Thou wilt forget no grave where Love
lies buried—

Though buried out of sound, and out
of sight—

And where the ranks of misery are serried,
For ever stationed in the silent night—

What of the midnight's still, yet breathing
hours,

Are they by no dark memories o'er-
cast?—

Hath the dark spirit of the past *no*
powers?—

Hast thou, then, buried thy dark sins,
at last!

Yet must thou bide thine hour, oh! hapless
man,

Thou did'st not order thy grief-laden
birth;

It was a Greater than thyself did plan
The length and sorrow of thy stay on
earth.

"THE HEART KNOWS ITS OWN BITTERNESS."

THE heart knows its own bitterness—from
God

It came, and unto God it shall return—
Man knows, through life, what paths his
footsteps trod,

What punishment his secret sins should
earn—

They who predict what labyrinth he shall
tread,

Predict in vain—despite their loud con-
ceit—

Idle the prophecies their lips have said,
Foolish the bells they toll—the drums
they beat—

Yet shall man pass vain judgments—with
blind eyes

Pretend to note what ground his brother
treads,—

Though veiled from him as may be—
Heaven's own skies,

That brother's joys and troubles, fears
and dreads!

The strings that pull our puppets he sees
not,

Nor what pale ghosts disturb the couch
at night—

The darker, sterner troubles of his lot,
His blasted future — his ambition's
blight—

Although a brother, little knows of him,
Who shares the pains and conflicts of
this earth,—

The eyes with which he witnesses are dim,
His sentences are of no weight, nor
worth—

How often he may wrong he shall not
know,

In judging others, though he judgment
gives—

*The heart knows its own bitterness and
woe—*

Its darker hours in silent sorrow lives.

AH! THERE ARE PATHS—

A LESSON OF THE WORLD.

AH! there are paths where glowing sun-
light falls,

And seeming touched by no discordant
sound,

Oh! there are homely cots and lordly
halls,

Where plenty, yet not love and peace
abound—

Oh! there are buds in which the worm
may sleep,

Yet where its rest will leave an evil
blight,

And bowers through which lithe adders
softly creep,

Hiding from open and from healthy
light—

While passers-by will gaze with curious
eyes,

On spots that seem to glow in warmth
and rest,

And deem the dwellers under those fair
skies,

With all their sweet surroundings,
doubly blest!

For they see not, with their weak, foolish
eyes,

The vapours foul that cloud the seeming
day,

Nor yet the warning shadows of the skies,
That neither breeze nor moonlight clear
away—

They hear the laughter ringing through
the air,

Borne lightly by the fitful breeze
along,—

But they hear not the mutterings of
despair,

Whose low deep notes shall under-lie
the song!

NOT OF "THE WORLD!"

ACROSS the world they took their
"cautious" tread—

They stepped but in the footprints of the
dead—

They followed pathways followed long
before,

That were the Pharisees', in days of
yore—

Their features wore a neat, conceited
smile,

They were not of "the *World!*"—that
realm so vile—

If wolfish instincts yet *would* stir within,
The clothing of the sheep concealed the
sin!—

Their hearts, however, *sometimes* choked
with wrath,

Because their path was so obscure a
path!—

Because their ways were still but common
ways,

And won neglect—secured no true man's
praise—

They saw the sunlight was both warm and fair—
 Yet said the face of earth, not heaven,
 was there—
 To climb the mountain they were given
 no power—
 They muttered that the unplucked grapes
 were sour—

They coveted ambition's brilliant lot,
 Though loudly they assumed to envy
not—
 And still the earth passed on its round—
 while they
 Went slowly—feebly towards the parting
 day!

THE MEAN!

MEAN were their souls—yes! mean beyond
 all measure—
 Mean in their grief and meaner in their
 pleasure—
 Mean in their vanities and in their aims,
 Poor in their present, as in future claims.

Though, loudly, higher virtue they pro-
 fessed,
 By but mean actions seemed their souls
 impressed—
 Few words were worth remembrance that
 they said,—
 Faint on the paths of life their daily
 tread—

And what the right hand did the left
 would preach—
 They knew not Wisdom—yet were rash
 to teach—
 "They were as oaks, each brother as a
 reed!—
His work shall fail, but *their* work shall
 succeed!"

They saw of others' lives the sin and
 waste,—
 Deplored the deeds by which they were
 disgraced!—
 Their own paths were so busy and so
 wise—
 Motes only seemed to blind their *brother's*
 eyes!—

A light shone always on their own pure
 way,
 So virtuous and serenely good were they—
 The years of others were but false, or
 hollow,
 Theirs only, were the paths that men
 should follow!

A "FALSE LOT!"

YET what had they to do with all my
 troubles,
 That they such falsehoods spread about
 them now?
 A lie, full often, pain and woe redoubles,
 Deepening the heavy shadows on the
 brow.

What have I done to them—save *friendly*
 deeds?
 Speaking *too* kindly of their home and
 hearth—
 Why should they joy to sow the devil's
 seeds
 So thickly on our every field and path?

Why seem so jealous of each joy of mine—
 Why is there so much malice in their
 gaze—
 Why hate the wreaths that Love's warm
 fingers twine
 Around my brow in happy, summer
 days?

I have led many wrong upon this point—
 Almost, in very truth, as though *I* lied—
 I thought their Christian armour without
 joint,
 Or flaw—not that the links *with* lies
 were tied!

Truly all this is clear now, to mine eyes—
 And it is well that others, too, should
 know—
 (Others—who—*like myself*—are not o'er
 wise!—)
That often is but pitch, that seemeth—
 snow!

THEY TOLD ME—

THEY told me of the falsehoods that
 were uttered,
 That came out of a heart most strangely
 black—

Meant, by the swollen lips from which
they spluttered,
To poison every footfall on my track.

O yes! *I* heard of them—when fresh and
hot!

And even from those *to whom they had
been told!*

O yes! I heard of them—and few had
not—

For they were uttered by a spirit bold!—

And one that feared not conscience in the
least—

'T was always kept well chained down in
the dark!—

To such to hurt another is a *feast*—

Especially if one of loftier mark!—

Loftier than they—at least—but *that* says
little!—

Little, indeed—even less than some *may*
think—

Oh! Truth's fair vase is in their hands full
brittle!—

And even its broken fragments they
will—*blink!*

I have known people loathe all kings and
queens,

Because they “rode above” each vulgar
head—

But hatred never is beyond their means,
Whose seeds upon our every path they
shed!

THEIR WASTED TROUBLE!

LOVE listened smiling to their foolish
preaching,

Nor cared that the cold winds around
her blew—

Love had her own, sweet, tender ways of
teaching—

Her heart was constant, and *her* lips
were true!

“They” fain would have dishonoured her
—in eyes

That chose to look for beauty, not for
blight—

They drew their evil veils o'er her own
skies,

And sought from her fair eyes to shut
the light.

They sought to trample under their coarse
feet

All that Love prized—aye! and their
touch was worse

Than death—all that Love held as pure
and sweet

They fain had handled, till it *grew a
curse!*

But Love read all that hateful work of
theirs—

She saw each evil heart was as a stone—
She smiled at all their foolish, wasted
cares,

And bade them go upon their ways—
alone!

And Pity—one would hope—*may* not for-
get

That Love at best, must be to them a
dream—

A sun that rose not, therefore could not
set—

A light of which they had not, here, a
gleam!

AN UNPLEASANT RECORD!

THEY hated her with all the strength of
spite,

Because her footsteps were on paths more
bright

Than any *they* could tread—

They hated her with all their feeble
hearts,

Because they saw her play far higher parts
Than theirs — some, laughing,
said!—

They hated her that she was better born
And bred than they—treating such facts
with scorn—

Or—*envy*—others whispered—

The evil lies they told of her were such
It were *too* curious to enquire *how* much
Their tongues were blistered!—

And they would even slander her when
strong!

When weak—*then* all she did was doubly
wrong,

Was still more steeped in sin!—

They hated her for beating them in fight,
'Twas nothing — that *her* cause might
just be right—

They only cared to win!

BITTER SOULS.

No! there was scarcely in her life a fact
That they had not in some cruel way at-
tacked—

No! she had scarcely uttered even a word,
But they some evil from it had inferred!

She never from *their* common path could
stray

But they some obstacle placed in her way—
There fell upon her never ray of light
But they saw something in it that would
blight!—

No simple, happy act her life could claim,
But they attuned it to some note of
shame!—

Not even from hated warfare could she
cease,

But—it was weakness called—not love of
peace!

There was no talent she could exercise
But—it was "*showing off*—for others'
eyes"!—

Touched by *their* hands of envy and of
blight

Nothing retained its purity and light!

Her acts of dignity they called her pride—
Or done from vanity—they loudly cried—
Man, and not God, they, lying, said she
served,

Therefore no mercy at their hands de-
served!

Oh! for what mercy shall *ye* dare to pray,
For all the evil deeds of your own day!
Look ye for bread where ye but gave a
stone?—

Alas! the sufferings, therefrom, are your
own!

TO CHARITY.—I.

THOU hast forgotten, in these modern
days,

O Charity!—thy gracious life of old,

Thou dost forget, in unobtrusive ways,
To hide both sin and error from the
cold.

Hast thou been so much "cuffed" and
so much chidden,

That thou hast doffed thy cloak for very
shame!—

Or so long in the solitude hast hidden,
That some profess they know not thy
true name!

They *called* thee Feminine! in days gone
by,—

Days that seem fading now into the
night—

Before thy skin was chilled by our rude
sky,

Before thine eyes were hurt by our rude
light.

Thou hast a myriad foes rather than
one!

Who near thee try a despicable race—

Yet who but at a halting pace can run—
Who take from thee thy riches and thy
grace.

O Charity! sweet Charity—we still

Will hope for brave hearts and for
better times,

When we may lessen earth's great load
of ill

*By other means than counting up her
crimes.*

And when thy right hand may not always
show

To all who pass—the good deeds of the
"pure"

And "holy" in this world—but shall be
slow

In prating of the sores that thou might'st
cure!

TO CHARITY.—II.

FOR those who throw gold pieces to the
poor

Are not the friends of whom thou art
most proud—

Those who may enter never yet the door
Of misery, or be brethren to the
crowd—

For there be those that to the needy give
Hard, bitter words that wound far
more than blows,
Who scoff at ways in which "those others"
live—

And such shalt thou look down upon
as foes!

These are not friends—thou criest, who
seek not

Into the wants of body and of soul—
Know not the shadows of man's meaner
lot,

Nor seek from the pit's mouth the stone
to roll—

For such as breathe the pit's foul air must
need

Grow feeble and degenerate, and the
force

Leaves the bared right arm — and the
choking weed

Of hopelessness shall run unchecked its
course.

Ah, scoffer! if thou *first* would'st bring
good food—

Good air, good clothing to the million
weak,

Thou would'st breed cleaner thoughts—
work *far* more good

Than by all sermons thy cold lips would
speak.

THE PHARISEE'S DECLARATION.

"THE world is full of bitterness and sin,
And there is no one righteous—no—not
one!*

Licentiousness and greed our battles win,
And side by side in all Life's races run!

"Evil the shadows resting on earth's
lands,—

Evil the shadows lurking in her groves,—
Evil is he that serves—he that commands,
Evil is he that hates and he that loves—

"No! there is no one righteous—long
ago

This was declared of man—alas! still
more

The truth of this dark judgment do we
know
Now—as in centuries that have marched
before!

"Thinking of self, and self alone, breathes
man!—

For self, *alone*, he runs Life's arduous
race—

Aggrandisement is ever in his plan,
On his own head some shining crown to
place—"

That others suffer—what is it to him?

That others die shall cause no tears to
flow—

Eyes sad with weeping make not *his* grow
dim—

Nor shall their brave deeds make *his*
bosom glow!

THE WAYS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS—

AGAIN A COMPLAINT!

THE ways of righteousness are steep and
long,

The ways of sin are downward, smooth
and broad—

The voice of hatred is both coarse and
strong,

When will Thy mightier voice be heard,
O Lord?

The victories of the wicked still in-
crease—

Their many conquests ring upon the
air—

We listen for Thy voice of Love and
Peace—

Only the voice of Hate and Fear is
there.

The tones of mocking unbelief are loud,
And echo through the world that *T'hou*
hast made!—

Sounds of contempt and scorn are in the
crowd,

Man cries aloud that Faith hath been
betrayed.

* An old echo, doubtless! caught up by some poor souls in these days.

That voice of sinners is a fierce, shrill
voice,
That comes nor sweet, nor musically
past—
The flowers of Life that are both fresh
and choice,
Are often withered by a northern blast.

The ways of righteousness are steep and
long,
The ways of wickedness are smooth and
broad—
The voice of hatred is both coarse and
strong,
When will Thy mightier voice be heard,
O Lord?

TWO VOICES.

THE OUTER VOICE!

"FORGET!"

"Thou speakest truly—to forget were
well!
Yet is it wearisome through life to
meet
Those who seem only near your paths
to dwell,
That they may cast their snares around
your feet!"

THE INNER VOICE!

"Forget!"

"Thy foes are barely worth a passing
sigh,
Compassionate the sorrowful and meek—
Pass thou the scornful ever coldly by,
And hold thy hand out to the worn—or
weak.

"Forget!"

"Only the sweetness of thy life recall—
The fair fruits that have ripened on thy
lands!—
Look thou not under the funereal pall,
But o'er it strew fresh flowers with
tender hands.

"Forget!"

"The winds are hushed—remember not
the showers,
The stars have risen, and the day is
past—
The dew is sleeping on the folded flowers,
The many plains of earth are rich and
vast.

"Forget!"

"Forget the storms that swept thy shel-
tered bay—
The bitter winds that vexed thy wearied
waves—
Bury the dead thou seest by the
way.
And lay their faults and follies in their
graves!"

AN UNPRIZED PICTURE!

A GROUP of figures one too well has
known—
Standing between this earth and
Heaven's own light—
The symbol of whose hearts might be a
stone,
The outcome of whose breath is as a
blight—

They fill a single canvas—for to paint
More figures in that group had been a
wrong —
All other colours had perforce been
faint—
These need a brush whose hues are
dark and strong!

We will not touch this picture! it would
prove
No pleasant task such withered hues to
blend;—
A labour that shall not be helped by
Love,
Might easily *our* simple powers
transcend!

Or might it be a better deed—to blot
The figures *out* and leave an empty
space—
And let the scene, once theirs, now know
them not,
By filling it with forms of love and
grace!

Only—they are so deeply grained, that
they
Need something of a hand that fears no
strain,
To wash them into anything like *grey*,
And make the canvas pure and clean
again!

A MAN ONCE MET!

OR,

THE HARSH VOICE.

BE still, harsh voice! thine accents, sharp
and cruel,
Jar on mine ear in Life's more thought-
ful hours—
Must thy soul ever need such bitter fuel
As scorn, on which to nourish its small
powers!

Doth never sentiment of kindness fill
Thy heart; can anger only find a
place?

Dost thou but feel a cold, indignant
chill

When others — “feebler,” thou say'st,
“win *thy* race?”

What are the objects that thou would'st
obtain?

Is it the mourner's grateful thanks to
earn—

Or to alleviate thy brother's pain,
Or something of the world's great works
to learn?

Is it to spend in sober thought—*sometimes*,
The hours of day—thy self-esteem and
pride

To keep in check, so that this earth's dark
crimes

Be not within thy vision multiplied?

Thou would'st do better work throughout
the hours

Of Life—become earth's worthier citizen,
Devoting to thine *own* faults all thy
powers—

Rather than crying *those of other men*.

AH! TRUTH HERSELF—

AH! *Truth* herself hath *sometimes* to
admit

She cannot always reach the fool and
knave—

That there are cases in which cannot fit
Her counsels; least of all if they be
brave!

There are some brains that seem as though
encased

In a tough parchment that defies her
skill—

On which most thoughtful Labour seems
but waste,

Her strong hands tired—despite her
patient will!

She cannot reach some stolid minds—the
night

In which all their ideas are resting
seems

Impervious even to her strongest light,
One that can break not even on their
dreams!

Some shapes they hug—foul things that
they miscall

Even by Truth's noble name—the all
and each—

Shut in by some impervious, old-world
wall,

Although their mockery Truth would
gladly teach.

No! Truth! even *thy* firm hand and *thy*
clear eyes

Can never reach some souls—thy hope
is vain—

He fails but ignominiously who tries—

His warm heart saddens, and fatigues
his brain!

TO —.

ALAS! unhappy creature—hast thou not
One loving friend, to warm thy chilly
heart—

Are there, then, *none* to share thine
earthly lot,

From whom it would be worse than
death to part?

A grey, cold life! yes—many on this earth
Have had but faded colour in their
skies—

And life hath often had but paltry worth—
With little glory to entrance their eyes.

Sad, dull, or dreary—paths that wait for
some

Go winding on their undistinguished
way—

The colours of its scenes are chiefly *dun*!
 Its night and morning wear the hue of
grey!

Doth love's rich vision *never* warm their
 hearts—

An *amulet* through troubled times to
 wear—!

Have they no interest in the world's great
 marts,

Or, through its brighter paths, no
 thoroughfare?

Many live such ignoble lives we know—
 Whose vision rarely from the earth is
 lifted—

And many take the tangled paths below,
 So into outer gloom have slowly drifted!

AGAIN BLIND!

(THERE IS BLINDNESS—and BLINDNESS).

BLIND! blind, indeed—and even strangely
 blind!

Or willfully in darkness, some might
 say—

'Tis certain that they trouble not to find
 The sun that lights and cheers another's
 way!

Oh! theirs are of the hearts that can
 believe

No virtue that shall be to *them* un-
 known —

Yes!—there are eyes scarce able to perceive
 A joy, a beauty that is not *their own*!

The words of peace, of healing, they forget—
 They can remember only those of hate—

If it be true they sometimes feel regret
 Alas! too often seems it when—too late!

Yet they assume to wonder *why* we shrink
 From them—they cannot even understand

Our scornful coldness — nor pretend to
 think,

Or know, why we reject their proffered
 hand!

Oh! can it be of such the head—or heart—
 That scarcely seems of Charity to
 know?

Ah, Charity! help those—who have no part
 In feeling for another's pain and woe!

THE LIVES THEY LIVE.

WRAPT up in their own feeble thoughts
 and fancies,

Their mean eyes fixed on the most sordid
 goals,

Wrapt up in all that, in a word, enhances
 The self-esteem that dominates such
 souls—

They are indeed as *cyphers* on earth's
 lands,—

Most things evoke their anger, scorn, or
 fears!—

Experience comes not to them with full
 hands,

Age comes,—but with no crown for his
 ripe years!

They know nought of the mists that veil
 their eyes,

Their faults grow giants through their
 self-conceit!—

They count their steps, beyond all others,
 wise,—

They call their ways, beyond all others,
 sweet—

A self-engrossed, self-flattered life they
 live,

From their own paths their thoughts
 can rarely lift—

Events, around, serve often as a sieve,
 Through which their weak and small
 ideas to sift—

For of the *leanness* of the earth are they—
 Running the *very poorest* of Life's
 races—

None will to Heaven plead for their longer
 stay,—

Others with stronger souls may take
 their places!

IS IT SO HARD FOR THEE—

To—.

Is it so hard for thee to e'er receive
 Into thy mind thoughts of Eternity—
Impossible, that thou should'st even con-
 ceive

Another world shall be beyond *thy* sky!

Impossible—that thou should'st ever dream
 Of angel faces and of angel feet—
 Of spheres wherein but rays untarnished
 gleam,
 Of voices that are only pure and
 sweet!—

Yes! realms where shall be never bitter
 moans
 Of wounded spirits and of hearts be-
 trayed,—
 That shall re-echo not upbraiding tones,
 Reproachful of the steps that weakly
 stray—

Can'st thou not image, even, that home of
 peace,
 Where all the wars that troubled earth
 are o'er—
 And where all "Pharisaic songs" shall
 cease—
 Where strains of self-praise shall be
 heard no more?

If not, I pity thee with all my soul—
 Thy mind will lose its balance and its
 stay—
 The hope of reaching some far, glorious
 goal,
 Should be the sunlight of our mortal
 day!

AH! —DOST THOU HEAR NO VOICE.

AH! dost thou hear no voice in the still
 night
 That bids thee note thy life's decreasing
 light—
 That shadows on thy path grow dense and
 long?
 Repent!—it cries—for thou hast done much
 wrong!

Alas! it is too late—too late!—for those
 Of whom thy lies have troubled the
 repose—
 Too late—too late, must fall that bitter
 tear—
 Nor can'st thou whisper into Death's cold
 ear—

And for this shalt thou suffer—and thy
 ways
 Shall meet no measure of ennobling
 praise—

The hand of love shall on thy tomb strew
 not
 The flowers that *might* have decked thine
 empty lot!

Flowers fittest for thy grave shall be of
 those
 The air of some ungenial climate knows—
 Ill grown, ill-nourished—poor of bud, of
 leaf,
 Their blossoms nipped by ill-conditioned
 grief—

The sweetness and the glow that might
 have been
 May have remained, by thy cold eyes,
 unseen—
 Alas! no sadder thing could e'er be said,
 To living ear, nor whispered to the dead!

CONTRASTS.

OH! wasted years of bitterness and spite—
 Oh! wasted hearts—so full of hate, of
 blight—
 Oh! lips that burnt with such *astounding*
 lies!—
 Oh! souls as sordid as they were unwise—

Would none of ye had e'er our footpath
 crossed—
 Would that all memory of ye might be
 lost—
 Would that your ways could never more
 cross ours,
 Than Arctic breath might come to southern
 bowers—

Ah! life so full of contrasts!—here the
 rose,
 And here the evil, poisonous hemlock
 grows—
 Here bend the apple-branches, full of
 fruit—
 And under, sneak the adder, lizard—
 newt—

"Here lies," are on a marble tomb en-
 graven—
 And near it hear not nightingale, but
 raven!—
 Here sleep the young hares in their *form*
 at night—
 See there the weasel, in the fair moon-
 light—

Love walks beside thee with her gentle
tread,
The light of Heaven upon her face is
shed—
Hate follows her, with hot and fevered
breath,
Even to the very gates, alas! of Death!

PASS ON!

(TO TRANSLATORS.)

PASS on! ye forms of low and vulgar
spite—

I close against ye the once open gate!—
Pass on, into the meaner realms of
night—

The skies of earth are tranquil now—and
late!

I have told of your deeds at sundry
times—

Of your contracted eyes and narrowed
brow—

And counted scornfully your petty crimes;
With such shall be no bond of friend-
ship now!

Pass on! ye shall not come where I may
hear

Those tones that I too long have known
and heard:

Once more the air in these still hours is
clear—

By neither breath of hate, nor malice
stirred.

So come ye never more into my
place,

To there contrive *again* a lying tale—
To rob it of its spotless love and
grace—

And leave on all things fair thy serpent-
trail—

Now is *my* hour at last — the hour of
calm—

The blighting storms of envy have passed
o'er—

The evening air is full of peace and
balm—

But ye come near and enter—never more!

USELESS SPECULATIONS.

WHY have these things—these things, so
foul and dark,
With eyes of malice and with tongues of
spite,
Sought on my life to make their evil
mark—
Sought to extinguish all its sweeter
light?

I know not—I—it is not here, for us
To probe the subtler veins of many
things—
And but as students, therefore, we discuss,
The heavy shadows of the raven's wings.

We can foretell not yet, the coming storms,
That blight the promise of our summer
flowers—
How, then, shall read the meaning of the
forms
Of evil that o'ershadow mortal hours?

Death his own history keeps—a tale un-
read!

His race, at least on earth—is ever
won!—

We only hear the echo of his tread,
By work accomplished—or by work un-
done.

And yet—how haughtily we walk the earth!
With all the mien and bearing of a
God—

We — who know not the secret of our
birth—

Nor of the paths on which our footsteps
trod!

REJECTED!

I KNOW thee now—I know thee as of
those

That claim an entrance at Heaven's
shining gate,—

Who on their near approach may see it
close,

And hear a great Voice sternly calling—
“WAIT!

“Thou can'st not enter here!—a time of
long

Stern retribution must arrest thy feet—

The weak thou hast oppressed—not fought
the strong,—
No tones of love thy coming here could
greet.

“Thou can’st not enter here!—the hearts
of scorn—

The hands of cruelty—the lips of spite—
Shall ne’er obtrude upon a golden morn,
Their doom shall be the doom of foulest
night!

“Thou can’st not enter here—on earth
thy soul

Craved but the kingdom of unwholesome
skies—
Thy steps, *then* raced to reach another
goal!—
Thy hands were stretched out for a
darker prize!

“Was *this* the aim *then* sought — the
longed-for gain

That filled with Hope—while Hell in-
spired no fear;
Go back! go back! thy prayers are now
in vain—
The Gate is closed! thou can’st not enter
here!”

QUESTION AND REPLY.

QUESTION.

“AH love! when will the earth look bright
again?

When shall have ceased this ever-dreary
rain—

When will the earth resume her summer
dyes—

When will the North wind cease its sullen
sighs—

“Where are the roses—once so bright and
sweet—

Where the pure daisies, springing round
our feet—

Where are the myriad blossoms summer
yields—

Where the sweet lilies of the woods and
fields?

“Only the sound of faintly fluttering
leaves—

Of swallow—twittering from the sodden
eaves—

Only a silence—and a leaden weight
Of all things—only Nature desolate!—”

REPLY.

“Nay—love! thy words are far too dull
and sad—

Even if thy present seems so gloomy
now

Hast thou no happy past to make thee
glad—

To lighten the dark shadow on thy
brow?

“The sun will shine again upon the earth,
The clouds shall roll back from the fair,
blue skies;

Again shall waken sounds of cheer and
mirth—

And joy shall smile into thy very eyes!

“Thou art by far too easily oppressed,
There is a time for laughter, as for
tears—

There is a time for labour and for rest,
*And all is well in the long roll of
years!*

TO-DAY.

A LESSON OF LIFE.

TO-DAY is sweet and fair,
Fair as a lover’s dream,
Wild roses scent the air,
White lilies breast the stream—

To-day the heavens are warm—
By shadows lightly passed—
To-morrow brings the storm,
To-morrow brings the blast—

Sullen the shadows lie,
Cold is the northern blight—
Dark vapours veil the sky,
The earth is sad with night—

Under the sombre yew,
Over the dreary tomb,
Sadly our cold hands strew
Fair Marguerites, in bloom—

For ever restless—changing —
Now unto dark—now light—
The fainting soul estranging
From earth to realms more bright—

But short and vexed our time—
 But bitter is our day—
 Now seem we in our prime—
 And now—have passed away!

AH, YES!

AH, yes! thou hast thy fierce, unsparing
 blasts,

O Earth! that sweep as whirlwinds
 through the air,—
 The rage that spareth nothing while it
 lasts—

That listens to no wailing and no
 prayer,

Thou hast thy days when every flower is
 wooed

By zephyrs that hurt not the sheep—
 new-shorn—

So—days when snow falls on the unfledged
 brood,

When tender things are into tempests
 born;

Yes! thou hast times of peace and times
 of rage,

And of Ambition's frenzy of pursuit—
 When war with all things dost thou fiercely
 wage,

Both with opened blossom and ripe
 fruit;

On ravaged plains we see thy fair things
 die,

And fire and sword victorious o'er the
 land—

And some shall note all this with hopeless
 eye,

Nor have the power to help by voice,
 or hand—

They well may call thee old, O mother
 Earth!—

How much hast thou not suffered—hast
 not seen!

What evil marks are on thy length and
 girth—

Thou need'st not pray thy memory to
 keep green!

Full often late dost thou the past recall—
 Thy wasted, *criminally* wasted hours!—

And fear to lift up many a gloomy pall,
 Or to reflect on thy misguided powers.

BROKEN LINKS.

AH! lost and broken links! shall I no
 more

Replace thy scattered fragments as before?
 Some links that were so brilliant—some

so dear,

Are they for ever disunited here?

Shall they not be re-fastened and com-
 bined—

Must I for ever grope and never find?

Ah! must we tread, beneath our very feet,
 The memories that should be but pure
 and sweet?

Alas! the heedless souls of passers-by!—

Who saw them broken — with uncaring
 eye—

Alas! the hands that helped to drive the
 blow,

The feet that trod them in the earth
 below!—

Yes! here they never more may be united—
 Yet, in that sphere where all things shall

be righted,

Where treachery and where trouble are
 unknown,

Fear not! fear not! each link shall claim
 its own.

MUTABILITY.

LEAVES of the Autumn, fluttering from the
 trees—

Flowers of the *parterre*, shrivelled, wan
 and pale—

The insects of the summer—humming bees,
 The homebound swallows—tell the same
 sad tale—

The tale that nothing lasts on earth's wide
 plain,

On hill, or valley, neither on the sea,
 Nor in the heavens above us—all is vain—

Our realms are realms of mutability!

And through the years of change that o'er
 me passed,

Have I not, also, suffered much, and
 seen

The blighting of Life's sweetest hopes, the
 blast

Of very winter on the fairest scene!—

For I have seen the dark blow sternly fall,
That seems to spare—that seems to pity
none—

I, too, have learnt that there is change for
all,
And mutability—in all but One.

So—wisely turn from this dark earth to
Him—

And from earth's ever melancholy spot,
Whereon the light of Love so oft grows
dim,
Look upward! to the world that changeth
not!

YET—COMFORT IN NATURE!

YES! look from this dark earth to brighter
skies—

All whose thoughts to despondent levels
sink;

Look up, ye of the dull, weak-sighted eyes,
The draught of that pure air above to
drink.

This have I felt, through many rolling
years,

Known, it may be, to hearts full sad as
mine;

Let, then, to earth fall down the bitter
tears,

And into weeping eyes sweet light shall
shine.

Something full soothing is in the rich
glow

Of sunlight cheering the dull earth
below;

The fair lines drawn from every flower, or
tree,

The light that flashes o'er both land
and sea—

Nature can comfort—an old saying truly!—

A spirit breathing in the earth's dull air,
And yet hath varied moods—is now un-
ruly,

And now is tender, soothing—calm and
fair!

Yes! still from joy to grief her vision
ranges—

And Life hath little rest, save for the
dull,

The brain, at times, grows wearied even
of changes,
And sighs that earth of peace and calm
were full.

A WANDERER;

OR,

THEREFORE BE PATIENT!

SLOWLY the moon sank on the waves one
night—

When, guided by its slowly failing light,
Beside the flinty shore—by paths unkind,
A lonely wanderer went—a home to find!

Alas! thou weary one—the world is cold!
A world to whose bright gifts thou hast no
claim—

Thou hast no place within the human fold,
There is for thee, nor kindred, friend, nor
name!

Thy early days were full of wrong, of
sin—

And now—forsaken—thou may'st well be
sad!

Thy dream was, that the wise alone could
win,

The wealthy, only, in this world were glad!

It may be that the path that winds before
thee

With rudest stones bestrewed upon the
ground—

The very same pale moonlight shining o'er
thee

Lights some fair home to which thy steps
are bound.

Therefore be patient! for the stars that
shine

Upon a throne light also thy poor path—
And there are sadder hearts that even
thine,

That sit and weep beside an empty hearth!

LISTENING.*

FAR, far above the loud and vulgar noise
That ever shall distress the listening ear,

One seems to hear notes of eternal joys
Ring through the vault of Heaven,
distinct and clear—

* See "Listening," Vol. III.

Something that far-off echoing music
brings,
Touching the soul with an ecstatic thrill—
For Love Eternal—breathes upon those
strings
Of unseen harps—that holds the listener
still.

The many tones of malice and of hate,
That one so sadly hears—from human
throats,
Shall enter never through that shining
gate,
From whence come down to earth such
tender notes—

For little sadder is there on this plain
Of Earth, than the harsh tones that fill
the air—
The ear attuned to Love is stung with
pain,
For those shrill sounds are full of man's
despair.

Love!—Love!—Love the Eternal—the
divine,
Is as the voice of Heaven—calm, strong
and deep—
Or seems as Heaven's own arc above to
shine—
For whose oft-tarnished brilliancy we
weep.

Hate, malice, envy, stifle each sweet strain
That fain would gladden earth's tumultu-
ous air,
Alas! alas! we listen still in vain—
Sweet voices rise—to pass . . . we know
not where!

ONE—FORLORN!

SHE wanders in the cold and through the
gloom—
She looks not forward to the coming
morn—
She sighs but for the shadow of the tomb—
Her feet are bleeding and her garments
torn—

She goes with hopelessness upon her way,
And thinks, when hurt by thistle, or by
thorn,

Of those who scarcely for her welfare pray,
But rather curse the hour when she was
born—

Her treasures now are eaten up with rust—
Or trampled on by coarse, unheeding
feet—

Her flowers have all been trampled in the
dust—

Not one is left—untarnished—spotless—
sweet—

And as she wanders—hopeless—feeble—
dazed—

There is no shadowed peace upon her
face—

Her thoughts are not to higher regions
raised—

Nor are they of her last dark, resting-
place—

Only—one spot doth she remember still—
That lane! of honeysuckle and wild
rose—

That—she remembers even with a thrill—
So—ever!—till her life's last scene shall
close!

She hath been sinned against—ah! judge
her not—

God will be merciful, though man is
hard—

Her love shall wash away the evil spot—
And heal the wound by which her soul
was scarred.

TO EVIL!

EVIL! at times thy face
Is shown unveiled, and seamed with
hellish spite!

Thy throne is one of dark, Satanic grace,
And seeing thee we look into the night!

And yet—Be thou our Good!—
Not mocking say we this—Nay! but in
strong

And earnest fashion—men have understood
And felt — *the grandeur of defying
wrong!*

Evil! be thou our Good!
Thou hast shown and can'st show man
many things

Of such vast help, such warning, that he
could
Not always, rightly, curse thy sharpest
stings.

Ah, yes! thy veil is rent—
Not seldom by thyself—when men may
find
That thou shalt call from Heaven thy
punishment,
Even while thou seekest their weak eyes
to blind!

Evil! not simply once
But many times have we this marvel
seen,
And man shall posture, nor as knave, nor
dunce,
Although thou hast his darkest mystery
been!

Evil! be thou our Good!
And let earth know that in thy greatest
pride,
Thou art concealed by but a flimsy hood,
One that a true, strong hand shall tear
aside!

“L'HOMME QUI RIT.”

NEAR our own home, not in a foreign
place,
I met with “l’homme qui rit” the
other day—
So broad the seeming laughter of his face—
Yet it was melancholy, and not gay.

No! it was not a look that you could meet
Without the shuddering memory of a
tale
Shocking beyond all words,—whom none
could greet
And not his very lips grow sad and pale.

A youth—just in the heyday of his life!—
Hath he, I thought, *one* gentle, kindly
friend?—

Shall he, I wondered, ever own a wife,
Or dwell, apart, on earth, until the end?

Shall he, so branded by that ghastly grin,
Be ever but a thing that all shall fear—
Shall he no woman’s warm affection win,
Only the smile of pity and the tear?

Ah! weary are the paths of life to some—
And poor shall be the measure of life’s
bliss
To any hapless—blind, or deaf, or dumb—
But who shall gauge so dark a fate as
this!

EVER UNREAD!

THOU God of mercy, yet thou God of
pain—
Thou Mighty Mystery, even to the wise—
Thou God of the disordered, troubled
brain,
And of the weary heart — tear-laden
eyes—

Of children suffering from a parent’s
wrong—
From ancient shackles worn in modern
days—
From heavy burdens laid on weak, as
strong—
From wandering wisdom — from poor
folly’s craze.

Man ponders still o’er Thy mysterious
Book—
To guess at meanings that are therein
veiled—
Yet may not at the unknown future look—
*In reading which he evermore hath
failed—*

And still he wanders in the paths of folly—
Or so it seems, to finite eyes of ours—
Crowning himself with winter’s sombre
holly,
Or with the wreaths of perishable
flowers—

The clouds are heavy on the skies of man—
He looketh often through a heavy veil,
And feebly dreams of his Creator’s plan—
That still remains to him an unread tale.

OUTLIVING LIARS.

I THANK Thee, O my God!—I did not
die,
When in the shadows and the cold I
lay—
That yet I walk beneath a later sky,
And live, to bitter liars to cry—“Nay!—

"Each prophecy of thine was false—the
night
Hath passed away, the air is full of
balm—

Upon my path is shed an older light,
Yet light more grateful, in that it is
calm.

"This light ye shall not darken now—thy
feet

Would crush my every flower, to enter
here—

No blossom that is holy, pure and sweet
But touched by thee were withered—
broken—sere.

"I know thee — therefore *I my gateway*
close—

Thy voice shall break not on these restful
hours—

Nor shalt thou under my sweet roof re-
pose—

Nor in my garden stray—to blight our
flowers.

"Thy breath would poison all it breathed
upon—

Sweet roses would be blighted, as with
grief—

Each sprouting bud grow yellow, shrivelled
—wan—

If but thy evil hand had touched one
leaf.

"Go and for ever—though I feel no fear
But only shame for all thy evil ways—

Begone — again, thou shalt not enter
here—

Beyond thee lie our paths in these late
days."

GRATEFUL THANKS.

AH, God! I thank Thee! Thou hast given
to me

Full many hours of such supreme de-
light,

I felt I could not pray Thy Heaven might
be

A realm more exquisitely fair and bright!

Ah, God, I thank Thee—that mine eyes
have seen

Into the glory of Thy realms above—

And where Thy angels rest—there have I
been—

Into the very bowers of deathless love.

I thank Thee, for the hours when I have
soared

Above the shadows that lie darkly here—
And knelt in ecstasy—knelt and adored

A Light that hath no change—nor chill
of fear.

I thank Thee—for the hours beyond all
word,

Feeble and weak, of mine—to fitly
paint—

When I, O Heaven!—have listened and
have heard

The voices both of angel and of saint.

Truly for much I thank Thee—O my
God!—

For those rich gifts—beyond the stain of
tears

To spoil—that chequer paths by mortals
trod,

Through the strange, varied records of
their years.

TIME'S GOOD WORKS!

TIME strengthens our weak eyes—one now
sees clear,

Or clearer—hopes and failures of the
past—

Things once so far away grow strangely
near,

Mists have been scattered by the rudest
blast—

Time strengthens our weak eyes—once saw
we not

Through the false glimmer on a bitter
brow,—

We saw not on the peach the blighting spot—
Only *too* vivid is our eyesight now!

Time strengthens our weak eyes — the
common aims,

The vulgar prizes some mean souls would
reach,

The spite—that oft a seeming friendship
shames,

These are amongst the lessons Life shall
teach.

Time strengthens our weak eyes — she
teaches well,
Although her pupils shall be slow to learn—
The legends that old chronicles shall tell,
Still shall men's souls, as in past cen-
turies, burn.

Time strengthens our weak eyes—till they
shall view
With gaze less troubled the changed
skies of Life—

The false discarding to exalt the true—
Scorning the puppets with which earth is
rife—

Time strengthens our weak eyes—and thus,
no more,
Are they oppressed by only gloom and
blight—
And through the horizon so sad before
They see the dawning of a broader
Light.

1885.

A HAPPY POSTSCRIPT!

(WRITTEN AFTER THE PRINCE AND
PRINCESS OF WALES' VISIT TO
IRELAND.)

FAIR Princess—thou who all our hearts
hast won—

Thy brow we love to crown with fairest
flowers—

To sing the gracious deeds that thou hast
done

Might tax the most devoted poet's
powers!

But Dermot and his Kathleen sang the
lays,

The sweet old lays, of their bright,
flowery isle—

The sun shone down upon thy pleasant
ways,

And scarce was fairer to them than thy
smile!

Who doth not love thee!—never uncouth
word

Against *thee*, gentle princess, hath been
heard—

They say flowers spring where'er thy
footsteps pass,

That violets ever scent thy woodland grass.

Green, at that time, was oft thy favourite
wear—

Therefore were Erin's pastures doubly
fair—

And shamrocks in thy bouquet found their
place—

And blue "forget-me-not"—of tender
grace—

Fair Princess—thou who all our hearts hast
won,

Thy brow we love to crown with fairest
flowers:

To sing the gracious deeds that thou hast
done,

Must tax the most devoted poet's powers.

UNDER THE STARS, AND OTHER POEMS.

1885.

IN THE WATCHES OF THE NIGHT.

UNDER THE STARS.

THE dewdrops shine upon the passion-
flowers—
The sweet wild roses scent the forest
bowers—
The hare-bell trembles as the light wind
passes,
Then rests again amongst the whispering
grasses—

Under the stars.

Wandering beneath the cloudless summer
skies,
I look into my love's unfathomed
eyes,
Full of a tenderness still known to-
day,
And hear the vows those lips alone shall
say—

Under the stars.

Aye! faithful eyes that through the dark-
ness shine—
Eyes that reflect my soul, yet are not
mine—
Whose loving, glowing light shall lift the
soul
Above these realms where heavy thunders
roll,

Under the stars.

UNDER THE STARS.

STARLIGHT VISIONS.

HE who a watch shall keep
Upon the midnight deep,
For many leagues, for many dreary
miles—
Through dark and narrow straits,
Near Death's own frowning gates,
Prays, O ye distant stars! for thy bright
smiles.

Oh! when beneath thy beams
He stands and softly dreams
Of those sweet lips that once he fondly
kissed,
Loved eyes return to him—
Eyes tender, soft, and dim,
Look out upon him from the floating
mist.

And through the lagging hours
Dreams he of rose-sweet bowers,
Where, musing, sits a youthful form and
bright—
Until some petrel's scream
Awakes him from his dream,
Once more to keep the WATCHES OF THE
NIGHT.

AMONGST THE FIR-TREES.

O! ye sad fir-trees, what are all the
tales
Ye whisper to each other, sad and
low,
As the last glimmer of the daylight
faints,
And the moon rises, her pale face to
show?

Thy voices seem not even of our times,
But whisper of the centuries gone by—
Of ancient dynasties, long-buried crimes,
Ye, still remembering, breathe that hollow sigh!

Stately ye stand, and melancholy, sad,
Ye let pass on the ever-changing years—
Still in thy sombre mourning garments clad,
And weeping—if ye weep—but old-world tears!

Few are the flowers that grow near thy gaunt stems,
Save harebells that from sweeter realms have strayed;
Few grasses catch the summer's dewy gems,
Aye! even of those that grow beneath thy shade.

Yet from thy boughs come notes that tell of love,
To which even weary hearts may gladly hearken—
Softly the tender cooing of the dove
Falls on mine ear, even as the shadows darken!

EVENING MUSING.

THOU passest calmly from the earth, O Day!

Slowly and softly die thy steps away—
Into the arms of Evening hast thou thrown
The last fair, glowing colours, all thine own.

Now night awaits the coming of her Queen—

And, rising o'er the distant, dusky hills,
Faintly the moon's first tender ray is seen,
Reflected in the sparkling mountain rills.

Then, smiling through the silent, gloomy stems

Of sombre pines, as through acacia bowers,

She breaks into a thousand twinkling gems
The dew that lieth on the forest flowers.

One heareth but, at times, the distant cry
Of partridge calling to her scattered brood,

Save, now and then, a melancholy sigh
Troubles the silence of the sombre wood.

One passes on, with grateful, lingering feet,

Watching the shadows deepening in their grey.

Fair hour of evening—ever art thou sweet
To me, beyond all other hours of day!

EARTH'S IMMUTABILITY.

EARTH! thou art happy in thy centuries—
thou

Dost ever see re-bloom, through countless years,

The same sweet roses to adorn thy brow,
And hast no sympathy with human fears.

And if the winter strips, awhile, thy trees,
And the grass withers with the icy breeze,
And bulbs of spring flowers hide within the earth,

And hushed are all the notes of joy and mirth—

The songs of love shall echo yet again—
The butterflies flit o'er the cowslip plain—
The bees are hid in honeysuckle-flowers—
The singing birds are building in thy bowers—

For us, alas! not so—the time is hoar!
The joys of youth return to us no more—
We go on to our winter, and in vain
Look for *our* summer to resume her reign!

And, dying, we can break not thy hard crust —

And if, again, we spring up from the dust,
We know not where, or what may be that home

That lies beyond our own star-spangled dome.

MUSING.—I.

AFTER A STORM.

THOU passing storm, with yet thy lines of glory,

Thou art but like life's vexed, tempestuous story,

With thy reflections of the skies that
were—
Skies pale and chilly, or skies warm and
fair.

Here float dark mists of melancholy forms,
Yet ribbed with very lines of fair moon-
light—
Here the torn clouds of fierce, unsparing
storms,
Passing away to silence and to night.

Here are fair flowers, all broken now, and
dying—
Yet once so pure, so exquisitely sweet—
The sad soul for their ruined beauty sigh-
ing,
The reckless trampling them beneath
their feet—

Here the dismantled house, the weed-
grown grave—
The fallen fruit decaying in the grass—
The wrecked ships floating idly on the
wave,
Tossed by all careless winds that o'er
them pass—

O! thou great earth—with sometimes
gracious veils
To hide the mourner's ever-falling tears,
Thou bearest with thee many dreary tales
Of wasted lives, of incomplete careers.

MUSING.—II.

'Tis an odd thought by day, ye arching
skies,
To look into ye with our searching eyes,
And see not one of all these countless
lights
That brighten our small earth on cloudless
nights!

As each fair star rolls on through deep
blue space,
All uselessly we strain our anxious ears
To catch some sound of the eternal race,
Some echo of the music of the spheres!

Far as ye are from us, we often wonder
If spirits dwell on ye, and how they
robe!

If lightning plays around ye, while no
thunder
Reaches the ears of dwellers on our
globe!

So do we dream about thy fruits and
flowers,
Nor credit all men's "scientific" tales,
But choose to picture angel-lovers' bowers,
Bright rivers, and deep woods and
flowery vales.

For though one thing about ye we may
know
There may be thousands yet beyond our
reach—
Only—we are so vain—who dwell below,
And even what we *know not* will we
preach!

MUSING.—III.

Too often we complain of Time, as
though
Her pace were far too weary and too slow,
And would that certain periods way might
make
For some fair, fresher, newer day to
break!

And yet power, strength—they fail us but
too soon;
So—oft we dread the coming of repose,
And shrink to see the paling light of
noon,
And feel, too bitterly, the evening's
close.

We sigh to note the fading of the cheek,
To see bright youth no longer at the
prow—
The rolling of life's vessel growing weak—
The lines upon the mariner's worn
brow—

The elm's strong boughs, that now but
feebly bend
To meet the passing of the stormy
wind—
The falling from our side of each old
friend—
The many loved that we have left
behind—

And think what flowers of pale and sickly
bloom
The kindly ones will gather, some new
day,
'To lay in tender silence on our tomb,
As we go forth upon our unknown
way!

MUSING.—IV.

LIFE's lessons, truly, are full hard to
learn—
Aye, lessons that through every nerve
we feel—
Deep down into the saddened heart they
burn,
To leave thereon the scars that cannot
heal.

A sharp experience truly have they
brought,
Whose memories are as chains around
us riven—
Knowledge of bitter wars not nobly
fought—
Of dastard wounds in dastard darkness
given.

Of those waylaying thee in hours of sor-
row,
Who fight against thee, hidden in the
gloom—
Who fain would make thee dread the
coming morrow,
And long for rest—the deep rest of the
tomb.

Whose lips but open for the spread of
lies,
Whose eyes but watch thee through the
gloom of spite,
Who shun thee when the tempests veil the
skies,
But slily crawl o'er thee in the light.

Ah, Life! and yet of you should we com-
plain,
Who taught us the deep faithfulness of
love—
Who sang to us that sweet, undying strain,
That God hath sent us from the realms
above?

THE SHADOW PASSES.

FROM the believing soul the shadow passes,
Light shineth down into the thoughtful
eyes—
Upon the plains of somewhat withered
grasses
The pensive light of starlight faintly
lies.

And looking then upon the paths behind,
One marvels at the hardships of old
ways,
And little of the bitter past may find
Worthy the price it cost in earlier days!

Once read we Life's strange records, and
no more—
Her Book is spelt with trouble and with
pain—
Each fresh, perplexing page that we turn
o'er,
Our dimmer eyes may never read again!

This part of speech and *that*—ah! how
combine?
This one so new, and that—how hard
to learn!
How know the truth into our eyes shall
shine
Ere to another dimmer leaf we turn?

Trouble and anguish bring us many
powers
To help some few — it may be few
alone—
For some shall pass in shadow all Life's
hours,
Her varied lessons to the last unknown!

SO MAY I BLAME NOT LIFE!

So may I blame not Life, that she hath
shown
To saddened eyes her troubles, sins, and
waste—
I may not grumble, even though I have
grown
To know of many things the bitter taste.

Yet I know not if our too tender eyes
Do well to see in all things evil germs,

That we do suffer not in being wise,
Who kill our rosebuds to point out the
worms.

If we must needs know both of shame and
blight,

If we must needs of pitfalls be aware,
So should we also count the rays of Light,
And shun all evil phantoms that would
scarce.

I am content to learn what all *must* learn,
That shall be gloomy to our finite view!
Then afterwards a hopeful face would turn
To where true voices ring—sweet eyes
are true!

Therefore I blame not Life that she hath
shown
To saddened eyes so much of sin and
waste,
Nor grumble that on earth I thus have
known
Of many passing things the bitter taste.

I am content with knowing it is well
To hear a merry marriage peel o'er-
head—

Not always listen for the funeral bell,
Nor count the tombstones rising o'er our
dead!

PRAAYER—FOR THE UNREADY.

I LOOKED out on the dark and stormy
main,
And, musing, thought how many young
and brave
Were battling with its mighty powers in
vain,
While winds to fury lashed each moaning
wave—

I thought how many pallid lips must part
In weary prayer by morning and by
night—
How many a loving wife or mother's heart
Even then was shivering at the vivid
light—

That glare of summer lightning, flashing
o'er
The billows, by the fierce winds madly
stirred,

While heavy thunder pealed from shore to
shore,
And signal guns across the waves were
heard.

I prayed, aloud, those heavy clouds might
lift,
Lest those beloved at home that hour
should die—
For death, by storms at sea, alas! is swift,
And giveth little time for prayer or sigh!

Oh! in Thy power and mercy, grant that
time
Be given even by Thy bolts — O
Heaven!—
That none may pass to Thee in hardened
crime—
That none this night shall die, and die
unshriven.

Grant that the true and contrite heart alone,
The last long look at earth and sea may
cast,
And that Thy grace to sinners may be
shown,
Even if, O God of oceans! at the last.

A NOBLE BENEFACTOR!

I OWE to thee full much of broader
thought,
Of greater views of heaven—O mighty
sea!—
And if thy passing storms of strength have
taught,
There is a noble calm felt but by thee.

A feeling of thy great Creator's power,
The rules eternal, here obeyed by all—
The meanness of our every passing hour—
The limits of our strength, so strangely
small—

Thus shall reflective minds rise far above
Life's poorer cares and platitudes of
wars—
Lost in the thoughts of never-weary love,
As we look up into the world of stars—

And see them down into thy waters shin-
ing—
Thy waters—of such hidden, boundless
might—

Cheering the weaker spirits' poor repining,
In the broad thoughts we gather in thy
light!

Our passing is a breath in Life's broad
scheme,
Yet, while so many groan o'er *little*
woes,
And call existence but a fevered dream,
Shall *others* share the depth of thy
repose!

A CRY TO THE WORLD!

(BROTHERS, BE BRAVE OF SOUL.)

BROTHERS! be brave of soul and strong of
heart—
Write thy deeds cleanly—clearly—on
Life's pages—
See that thou tak'st in life a noble part,
Extracting wisdom from all bygone ages.

Live not for self alone—rather beware
Of solitary steps on mountain ranges—
Expect not that thy skies be always fair—
Tides of humanity have many changes—

Spend not the hours in counting up the
sins
That stain thy sister's or thy brother's
lot—
'Tis not the Pharisee, methinks, that wins
Even in that world where sinners enter
not!

Seek not life's crown and prizes over-
much—
Thy follies and false pride regard with
shame—
Put all thy strength and courage "to the
touch,"
Ere for thyself Heaven's graces seek to
claim.

O yes! be brave of soul and strong of
heart,
Write thy deeds cleanly—clearly—on
Life's pages—
See that thou tak'st in life a noble part,
Extracting wisdom from all bygone
ages.

AN ECHO, EVER—EVERMORE REPEATING.

AN echo, ever—evermore—repeating—
An echo—yet no answering echo meeting!

I have done that which I could wish un-
done,
And run the race that I would *not* have
run—

The lessons set us on this earth are vain,
And still shall man repent—to sin again.

Ah, Life! and must it ever be so here—
O Life! and shall thy notes be *never*
clear—

And shall we walk in footsteps of the
past—
And live our years unsatisfied at last?

How long shall mortal lips ring forth the
cry,

"Let me learn more, O Heaven, before I
die!

Aye! let me even Thy greater secrets
know,

That I with keener sight may dwell
below!"

A cry sent back from all Earth's vanished
ages—

A cry sent up through her tempestuous
air—

Written—engraved—on all Life's sadder
pages,

Now with wild yearnings, *now* with grim
despair—

I have done that which I could wish un-
done—

And run the race that I would *not* have
run—

The lessons set us on this earth are vain—
And still shall man repent—to sin again.

An echo ever—evermore—repeating—
An echo—yet no answering echo meeting!

CERTAIN FOOTSTEPS OF HUMANITY.

THE eagle builds not as shall build the
wren—

The common earthworm glides not as
a snake—

The apes shall scarcely do the work of men!

As aspen leaves the oak leaves never shake!

I have known people think that trifles *should*

Make up the sum-complete of human things—

At least that if in trifles they are "good"
They may look for the sprout of "angel-wings!"

Aye! trifles fill the hours of many here,
And leaders of such lives, such lives *esteem!*

They boast their footsteps are devoid of fear,

But only *little* fish live in *their* stream!

Their thoughts, like all their actions, grow but dull—

Their very eyes seem full of earth's fine dust—

Of small ambitions are their visions full,
Leaving the higher, nobler ones to rust.

The great things of this world they put aside,

They have, it seems, but little time for *these*;

As though should man — that form of strength and pride—

Fight not with wolves, but only with—their *fleas!*

A fatal blunder, and a dreary waste

Of man's, full often, few but pregnant hours;

The lines of such careers are soon effaced,
Nor shall their deeds ring from earth's loftier towers!

OH! IN THIS BROAD AND TEEMING WORLD OF OURS—

OH! in this broad and teeming world of ours,

That lies beneath the unread sky above,
One notes too often strangely wasted powers,

Devouring hate, and foolishness of love—

How shall one of us read it!—see below

The heavy veil now resting on the soul,
Its myriads of small mysteries to know,
Its destiny beyond—its final goal!

Nay, we can read not ev'n what shall belong

To lines of lesser things—earth's wisest men

Can yet interpret not the wild bird's song,
Nor the dark secrets of the lion's den!

All things of life have their own language, we

Who stand by, listening, *yet* may learn them not—

And in the air and under the deep sea
Are marvels unknown to man's higher lot!

Yet man himself — the king of all — do some

Assume to deeply fathom and esteem,
Because the inner soul is often dumb,
It is a dream, they cry, and *but* a dream!

So much a dream that what to some is real

To others is but as a passing breath—
And of all things they do, or think, or feel,

They note but this—that all things lead to death!

UNGRATEFUL!

WE call men worthless in the days of peace,

We grudge them even that rest their hands have gained—

From "nagging" and from fretting never cease—

Of all that sours us sharply have complained—

Then, when the but brief hours of balm have passed,

We send them forth upon the battle-field—

We bid them shrink not from war's fiery blast,

And scorn them as but cowards should they yield—

Aye! near our corn-fields peacefully we
rest,
Our ears by no wild, fiendish notes are
jarred—
'Tis others who should succour the dis-
tressed—
For us, if called to help, we deem it
hard!

Oh! the poor souls who dwell upon this
earth,
So full of weak complaints, of doubts
and fears—
Sometimes a subject for our mocking
mirth,
But fitter for compassion's gentle tears—

I would but humbly here advise that they,
Who live to point out stains on others'
hearths,
Would sometimes look back on their own
poor way,
And uproot weeds o'er-running their own
paths!

MUSING.—V.

LIFE had been happier had one never
learnt
In early days the paths can envy follow,
If not within our heart were deeply burnt
The knowledge of professions ever hol-
low—

Nor had we later known that souls we
trusted
In youth, and with a love so strangely
blind,
Had hearts by very selfishness encrusted,
And were the very meanest of their
kind!

Yet had one never cast, as once we cast,
Our bread upon the water with light
hand,
To find it floating on, and floating past,
Into a strange and an unfriendly land!—

Yet, had one never known what one knows
now,
That dreary lesson few on earth have
missed,
Of lying eyes, and of unfaithful brow,
Of traitor's lips that we, unwitting,
kissed—

Then, had we never felt as now we feel,
The glory of true love! nor read the
hearts
On which hath God Himself impressed the
seal
Of love that never from its trust departs!

MUSING.—VI.

ON MISTAKEN THEORIES.

AYE! there are those that dream that
kindness brings
Its own return—that spite, when near
it, dies—
That jealousy, with all its myriad stings,
Is conquered easily by gentle eyes—
That nothing can a sweet, soft voice with-
stand—
That none reject an *honest*, friendly
hand—!

But they mistake! — so also *we* once
thought,
To find our error; he whose hate is
strong,

Oft that his very brain is over-wrought
By some imagined, or too certain wrong,
May neither be the devil's slave nor tool,
And lives to learn that anger plays the
fool.

But cold, malicious hearts! ah! trust them
not—!

Their vows *seem* true in summer's cloud-
less hour,
Yet dream not thou can'st change the
leopard's spot,

Or thou may'st fall beneath his venge-
ful power;
Some hearts are *out* of friendship's noble
range,
And Love to them is—ever *will* be—
strange!

They may delude thee, though one knows
their spite,

For oft will malice slumber, when the sky
Is fair, and storms are not within our
sight,

And angry winds have sunk into a
sigh—

But know ye—when the serpent casts his
skin,

The one beneath is even as marked by
sin!

MUSING.—VII.

ON CERTAIN "FEMININE TEACHERS
AND PREACHERS."

OH! these poor women—how is it they
think
That they are formed to sit and judge
"the rest"?

That others stand as on hell's very brink,
While they perch on a snowy Alpine
crest?

And *who* bestowed on them the mighty
gift,
The wondrous power of judging human
souls?

Who is it—rather *what*—that thus shall
lift

Their heads into the realms where thun-
der rolls?

Yes! as on Alpine heights they sit—their
brows

Are crowned, they dream, with *immor-
telles*;—they spend

No hours, as did "the gods," in mad
carouse—

For these are not Olympean realms, my
friend!

They dare gaze ev'n into a certain place,
A ghastly deep, where hell-fires seem
to glow—

Assume to wear an angel's crown of grace,
And yet a demon's secrets boast they
know!

Of heaven they know *far less*—and that
were strange,

Only, their footsteps never run *that* way!
It lies, you see, so far out of their *range*,
And *other* duties fill each passing day!

Moreover, they find not one moment's time
To keep in cleanly order their own
paths—

Their duty lies in pointing out the crime
And folly blessing *others'* roads and
hearths!

Alas! poor women—*why* is it they think
That they are formed to sit and judge
"the rest?"

That *others* stand as on hell's very brink,
While *they* perch on a snowy Alpine
crest?

CURSED.

FROM the cold malice of a human heart,
No thought, no watchfulness can some-
times save,
In all things bright it loves to plant its
dart,
And o'er thy path rolls as a blighting
wave.

Yet, fearing oft to glance at its own face,
That face whose lines even its own con-
science knows,
It cowers in some secret, unwatched place,
And deals, in stealthy silence, its cruel
blows.

It is a thing that is most hurtful, when,
Thus, in some corner of thy life, it
lies,
And dares not face the challenge of brave
men,
Nor yet a woman's sad, reproachful
eyes.

And though in hateful darkness thus it
hides,
Waiting—in silence—through thy hours
of joy,
Yet still some fatal moment it abides,
Thy sweetest, fairest jewels to destroy.

And when the blow is dealt, the evil
done,
It shrinks again into its evil hole,
Dreading the clear light of the honest
sun—
A thing without a conscience, or a soul!

A POOR SOUL.

'Tis a poor soul, I deem, who through life
passes,
And hath no conflict here with any
foe;—
For there are meaner figures in all
classes,
That — surely — even the dullest needs
must know.

And if the honest shall rebuke the knave,
 Shall he, henceforth, warm gratitude
 display?
 Show something yet within him strong and
 brave,
 And go with thanks upon a sweeter
 way?

Would he not rather pray his days be
 long
 For diverse plans of bitter spite to
 frame?
 Would he not ever seek *that* man to wrong,
 To cast upon him obloquy and shame?

Would he not watch his path with hate's
 own eyes,
 And vilely wrong that man to all his
 friends,
 And with a very atmosphere of lies
 Fill even the sky that o'er his dwelling
 bends?

It needs be so, and yet thou shalt not fear
 If thou hast an upright and noble soul;
 Go on—unwavering—in thine own career,
 And thou shalt surely win life's nobler
 goal.

ON CERTAIN WELL-KNOWN "CRITICS."

SPEAKING with "unacknowledged wisdom,"
 they
 Pronounce on all the genius of our time,
 And judge all passing conflicts of the day
 With an assurance one might term
sublime!

These judge as our old maids! who claim
 to know
 All hidden things of gravity and weight—
 Will scorn Life's *surfaces*—so peep *below*,
 And learn all secrets of the married
 state!

Or as our "old maids married!" not *too*
 nice
 In studying all the woes of "double
 life!"
 Know ever less of virtue than of vice—
 Less of sweet peace than diabolic strife!

They *do* delight to venture near a *crater*!
 And, little frightened by its hell-like
 glow,
 Seek to learn more than statesman, poet,
 painter,
 Of furious conflicts ever waged below!

This little clerk, who lives in a small
 room,
 So flustered all the day by long accounts,
 His thoughts partake of the surrounding
 gloom!
 Are vexed by heights to which his
figures mount!

These are poor creatures—these—the world
 to judge—
 With only smoky walls before their view,
 And seeking with a bitter touch to *smudge*
 The fairer pictures other fingers drew!

LOVE—HER MYSTERY.

AYE! there are feeble hands that never
 reach
 The fruits that ripen on Love's sunny
 wall—
 Her lessons to their ears she cannot teach,
 Nor shall they hear her sweet, her
 thrilling call.

They never looked into her glowing eyes,
 They never slept within her fragrant
 bowers—
 They have not walked beneath her purple
 skies,
 Nor sat with her through twilight's magic
 hours.

Her book is as an unsealed tome to
 them,
 One they may open not upon this earth;
 Nor on their chilly breasts shall shine *her*
 gem—
 A gem of priceless, of immortal birth.

The thrilling songs Love singeth on her
 lute,
 Their ears shall hear not—shall have
 never heard—
 And their own lips shall evermore be mute,
 Because their hearts are silent and un-
 stirred.

Thy secrets, Love! are for the favoured few;

Thy rose is to the others as a weed,
To whom thy finest legends seem untrue,
Or even as mysteries they shall never read!

PITY—FOR “ONE WHO
DESPISES LOVE.”

I KNOW of few sad fates upon this earth
That one more deeply pities than his own!

Truly is he no subject for our mirth,
To whom love is—hath ever been—unknown!

What thus he loseth, *doubtless he knows not,*

Although the whole world of its light were full,

Yet is his but a melancholy lot—

Alas! that soul is leaden, cold and dull.

He is as one who never yet hath seen
A fair rose blooming under glowing skies,

Nor through a meadow of sweet blossoms been

To see the dew that on each leaflet lies.

The pensive moonlight hath no charms for him—

He shivers that its shadows are so deep—

The very stars look void of light, or dim,
Nor knows he why beneath them lovers weep.

From him Life's deeper ecstasies are hidden—

They have no echo in his chilly heart—
Let him to wedding feast be never bidden,
Nor in its higher mysteries take part!

For him the skies are only coldly blue—
He is apart from all life's sweeter grace—

No roses on his grave shall mourners strew,

Nor shall Love kneel above his resting-place!

AN OLD WARFARE.

LOVE! thou hast fought fierce battles here
with Hate,
And even when thy victories were late,
'Twas as the glorious richness of the way
That gilds the last hours of a stormy day!

They shall not beat *thee*—Love—out of the field,

Though they assail thee with all weapons vile—

Thou art no phantom—Love—to lightly yield,

For Heaven itself hath lent thee thy bright smile.

They taunt thee that thou art decrepid now,

The crown of flowers but withered on thy head—

They fain would tear the orange-wreath from thy brow,

Or swear its fragrant leaves have long been dead!

They say thy lyre is cracked and out of tune,

Thy melodies have lost their tender flow—

And that thou comest not with flowers of June,

As in the happy days of “long ago.”

I know they chant a false and jangling strain—

That it is they whom thou with scorn passed by,

To grow as blighted thistles on the plain,
While others knelt and praised thy glowing sky!

LIFE AND HER BURDENS!

THE GROAN OF A SUFFERER.

LIFE and her burdens — aye! and who could bear

The “fardels” were it not for Love's sweet aid?

Who else could long endure its fret, its care,

Its grief for blossoms opening but to fade?

Life and her burdens!—unto some beyond
All that the eyes can speak, or lips can
tell!

So great, that many seek to break the
bond

That binds us here, although the end
were Hell!

Life and her burdens!—unto some a curse
That throws its gloomy spell o'er every
hour—

Aye! unto some the breath of earth is
worse

Than is the maggot to the heart of
flower!

Life and her burdens!—even to all un-
known,

That worm—grim care—upon our vitals
feeds!

Only in dreary solitude we groan,
Only in darkness the heart—wasting—
—bleeds.

Life and her burdens!—truly but the hope
Of skies, than skies of earth more calm
and fair,

Even while we in the darkest shadows
grobe,

Shall save the soul from madness or
despair.

SWEET! I THANK HEAVEN.

SWEET!—I thank Heaven that now—now
when my years

Are years of autumn—when the doubts
and fears

Troubling the faith of youth have passed
away,

And that my dark hair shines with streaks
of grey—

I thank Heaven that my faith is still un-
changed,

Although it rests by a yet calmer
hearth—

That from my love of old, still un-
estranged,

I walk life's slower and sedater path.

So I pray God it shall be until death,
If with less burning radiance in thy
bloom,

Yet will I praise thee, Love, with my last
breath,

So shalt thou lay the garlands on my
tomb!

Nor shall it make us fretful that we see
The storms of earth bend down a noble
tree —

The rose-tree wither ere its blossoms
blow—

God sent both joy and grief to all below—

Yet beauty may be found by all that seek,
Even in the things that seem but rough,
or weak—

Under brown earth the graceful fern-
leaves furl,

And in the rude-shelled oyster lies the
pearl!

CHURCHYARD COMPANY!

HERE sleeps a fair young girl—earth's very
flower

Of beauty—cut down in life's early hour--

And here a brave young soldier, slain in
fight—

A patriot here who suffered for the Right!

Here sleeps one of a feeblar path in life—
Whose years had but been spent in useless
strife—

Here lies a Pharisee, who sang the song
That all of earth (except himself) were
wrong!

And here a creature, once of spite and
hate,

Who envied every others' higher state—

Who liked to climb up on the judgment-
seat,

To spurn all those that grovelled at his
feet!

And here reclines, in peace, a holy saint,
Whose mark, alas! upon this world was
faint!

Yet dwelt amongst us for a passing while—
Pure as an angel, free from earthly guile.

Here lie they side by side—their fight is
o'er,

Nor grief nor vanity disturb them more—

Their earthly life seemed but a passing phase—
God knows! if elsewhere shall be nobler days!

EARTH AND HER CHILDREN.

THOU art, O earth! so exquisitely fair!—
Music, the sweetest, trembles on thy air—
Fruits of the ruddiest in thy orchards grow,
Flowers of the brightest in thy gardens blow!

And yet thou liest still beneath a ban,
For thou art populated still by man!
Who purloins those ripe fruits, crushes
those flowers,
And leaves foul snakes in even thy fairest bowers!

And if thou hast these clear and gracious skies—
These flowers and fruits of many varied dyes—
These crystal moonlights and these glowing days—
These paths that angels well might make
their ways—

So hast thou, also, thy wild hours of rage,
When winds and skies a war of terror wage—
When strange internal conflicts rend thy plains,
When rain thy roses kill, mildew thy grains!

As thou art, so are we, who tread thy paths,
And build upon thee all our household hearths—
For we thy children are, O mighty earth!
Thou claimest death as thou hast granted birth!

THE SKY OF EARTH IS BROAD.

THE sky of earth is broad, the world is vast—
There is another than an evil blast
That bloweth now upon our tree-girt coast,
When war shall rage not, nor shall Evil boast.

Here we no voice of treachery need fear,
Nor yet the lying kiss, the cruel sneer—
Nor poisoned dew to blight our cherished flowers,
Nor serpent's trail to desecrate our bowers.

Here are restricted the vile deeds of hate—
The unseen hand of God, not simply Fate,
Holds sometimes back the storms that sweep the sky,
And bids their bitter, angry mutterings die.

The drooping flags wave not from vessels wrecked,
The sweeter, later roses bloom unchecked;
The swallows lightly skim the breaking waves—
The gulls build unmolested in their caves.

Foul things shall sometimes crumble into dust,
And leave but here and there an evil trace—
Patience—sweet patience—honour—faithful trust,
Each still unconquered—conqueror—holds its place!

A MEAN AND PEEVISH BAND!

THE SEA'S SLANDERERS.*

BROAD art thou in extent, queen o'er the land,
Fair in thy smiles, but *in* thy humours rough;
Yet there are those—a mean and peevish band,
Who hold thy empire to be “dull enough!”

And who, instead of thrilling records keeping
Of all thy great deeds done, from Pole to Pole,
Speak of thee as a monster, idly sleeping
That sleep of *dullness* as the ages roll!

Are they so ignorant?—have they not read
The records of thy conquests—of thy wars?

* Those who speak of the monotony and dullness of the sea!

Do they not know what thy "wild waves"
have said
Under the storms, or ever-listening stars?

Know they not of thy stern, majestic rocks,
Nor of thy thousand miles of coral bed?
Know they not of thy myriad winged
flocks,
Neither thy torpor, nor thy tempests
dread?

Earth is herself not broad and wide as
thou—
Far greater *thy* dominions—and her
brow
Is brightened or o'ershadowed still by
thee—
O thou eternal, thou unconquered Sea!

A MIGHTY VOICE.

I LISTEN as thy mighty voice subsides,
And takes its murmurs to another shore—
I hear but the faint breaking of thy tides,
The rush of angry billows is no more.

Dost thou, O Sea! thy reckless deeds
regret,
And grieve o'er those who find in thee
their graves —
Can'st thou, O sea! thy maddest rage
forget,
The fair ships cruelly shattered by thy
waves?

I hear thee, O thou mighty ocean! moan-
ing
Through wintry midnight's melancholy
hours,
As though for some past furious rage
atoning,
By the suppression of thy boundless
powers—

And ofttimes, in the ghostly hour of
dreams,
One fancies that thy wearied dead arise,
And, wandering out under the moon's pale
beams,
Fill the chill air with melancholy cries—

To know thee is beyond our mortal range—
Keep thou the secrets of thy myriad
dead!

Alas! all things of thy weird touch are
strange—
Thou art a mystery which is still un-
read.

SMALL AND PEEVISH VOICES.

HEAR'ST thou those voices passing through
earth's skies
Now loud and turbulent, now sickly
sighs—
The voice of envy and the voice of rage,
Of peevish youth, or yet more peevish
age?

Again—the angry accents that arise
Upon the air—discordant with foul lies—
The ringing echoes of malignant hate,
That on the tender air of summer grate.

What is this bitter thing that they now
speak?
What this repeated charge that they now
shriek?
That all, within this world, of sin are
full!
That vice is brilliant, virtue, only, dull!

Yet all these clashing voices have not
drowned
One of most tender, if reproachful,
sound—
A voice rebuking—yes! yet full of love—
A voice of earth, yet sent us from above!

That warns us that these vexed tumultuous
cries,
Out of man's own self-consciousness
arise—
They are of his own ill-taught soul, and
not
Those that need e'er disturb a sweeter lot!

NO!

No! Genius cares not for the voice of
spite—
She hath her own wild plains o'er which
to rove;
She hath her own fair palace of delight,
Through which shall ring the thrilling
songs of love.

Genius cares not for malice—nor for hate—

Her feet are strong, her eyes look out afar;

Her gaze can wander past this mundane state

Into the realm of meteor and of star.

Yet shall a rude note jar upon her ear—
That ear so exquisitely tuned, and fine—
To whom the songs of angels shall be clear,

Coming from realms where rays ethereal shine.

Yes! harsher echoes startle her awhile,
Disturbing as the grating of a file—
Or sometimes as a fiend's discordant screech—

Far into fairy realms such sounds may reach.

But as she onward passes they shall die
Into the silence of her glorious sky,
Change into strains most exquisitely sweet,
To follow her own fair and grateful feet.

FOR EVER—STRANGERS!

TRULY—I met them in an earlier day—
Yet strangers still—for ever strangers—
they!

A peck of stones hath sometimes held a gem—

A fair rose blooms on a plebeian stem—
A Creole mother hath a lily daughter—
Through arid deserts flows a spring of water—

Truly—I met them in an earlier day—
Yet strangers they — for ever strangers
they!

The dog is never comrade to the fox!—
What pleases one the nobler nature shocks—

The eagle looks with scorn upon the kite—
Larks sing by day—the owl but hoots by night—

Truly—I met them in an earlier day—
Yet strangers still — for ever strangers
they!

So in a *human* family you find,
Amidst the common, coarse and unrefined,

One of a finer nature—nobler growth—
A foreigner—an alien—one, or both—

Truly—I met them in an earlier day—
Yet strangers still—for ever strangers—
they!

Together, comrades, we can never dwell—
The hermit crab the stranger shall expel—
Wise Nature pointeth out a newer path
To those that linger by a worn-out hearth.

Truly I met them in an earlier day—
Yet strangers still—for ever strangers—
they!

OUR FEEBLE JUDGES.

AYE! in this wide, this spreading universe
Of human beings—with their differing brains

And souls, some seem as born beneath a curse,

Oppressed by grief, o'erweighted with life's pains—

Some, with no broad experience, to lift
Their minds above but grovelling fellow-creatures

With no especial or peculiar gift,
With no God-given, spiritual features—

Will yet be seen upon the judgment-seat—
On teaching, or rebuking *all* men bent!—

Their air one of "ineffable conceit,"
Their noses raised to sniff a carrion scent—

And yet what know these pigmies of the mass,

What shall they tell the world of wise,
or new?—

How dare they sentence on their fellows pass,

As though they looked on earth with Jove's own view?

And if, as one learns by an ancient book,
Once, "inextinguishable laughter" shook
The merry gods of old Olympian-ways,
How they would laugh—*lived* they but in our days!

CHIPPING!

To chip away at Truth's immortal stone
Is of the tricks of some that one has
known—
Little by little altering its first size
Until it is transfigured in all eyes!

And some this pebble boldly will present
As though the same that we had viewed
of old—
Yet such new characters to it were lent
It left its earlier history untold.

Full many of these toilers may be met
About the world—now as in ancient
times—
The smallest of them still a rogue, and
yet
The same acts done by *others* they call
crimes!

Of rectitude they boast, in ways that win
The cordial praises even of the wise—
Of Lying speak as of the deadliest sin,
The while a very mote in their own eyes!

For Sin is either blind or occupied
So much with faults of others all her
days
That she is known to show her robes with
pride,
As sure to meet with an admiring gaze!

HOW IS IT?

(A QUESTION FOR CERTAIN MORBID-
MINDED SLANDERERS.)

How is it that these are so very wise?
Into what evil precincts have they been?
How is it — boasting such clear-sighted
eyes,
That they but mean and vicious things
have seen?

'Tis said they are *recluses*—nothing more—
Aye! and most bitter-souled and sour
recluses—
Whom one hath known upon this earth
before,
As preachers, *not* reformers, of abuses!

Do they seek never trouble's shadowed
haunts—
The quiet spots where noble things are
done?
Where nothing, pale and gentle patience
daunts,
Where countless god-like conflicts have
been won?

Know they not the rough pathways of the
poor—
The bitter wars they sometimes bravely
fight—
And shall they coolly turn from sorrow's
door,
For dwellings that show only joy and
light?

It is not well to listen to such voices—
Each one is as the braying of an ass—
Each one in his own loud applause re-
joices,
And thinks himself the Solon of his
class.

WHAT SOME MISS.

THE kindly heart—the strong and honest
eyes—
That look *less* to note where the shadow
lies
Than where the sunbeams fall upon the
grass—
The glow through which so many fair
things pass—

That gladly see how ripe the apples grow,
And that the peaches have a luscious
glow—
Not *only* the foul stain upon the rind,
The blemish, owing to a blighting wind—

That mark the brightness of the golden
grain,
The corn that bends to breezes on the
plain—
That view the harvest that kind nature
yields—
The grass abundant on the slopes and
fields—

That note the fair days that from storms
are free,
The bird that builds in safety on the
tree—

The cattle that are strong and clean of
hide—
Not those, the lame—that to their stalls
are tied—

The sweet, clear eyes that look to Heaven,
yet know
That much is fair and strong, in homes
below,
And that the smile of God on earth shall
rest—
Only the harsh and false remain un-
blessed!

BREEDERS OF DISUNION.

THESE mischief-makers, who disunion
breed

In families—dividing friend from friend,
To serve some selfish, poor, and hidden
need—

Or, yet more, for revenge's bitter end.

Do we not know them!—do not many
tell

The same sad stories of their vicious
lies?

Do we not know them—Aye! good truth
—too well!

Or—one lived not on earth with opened
eyes!

Their step is of a sneaking kind—

They tread upon thy flowers with
stealthy tread,

They throw a network o'er a feeble mind,
And of their work is little known, or
said—

And, fathoming the soul that ne'er forgets,
Long, unhealed sores will their keen
eyes discover,

Then, with the practised hand that hurts
and frets,

Will they old comrades part—lover from
lover—

And men have known few more injurious
foes,

Nor any that more smilingly betrayed—
And who have crept as worms into a rose,
And killed its heart in silence and in
shade!

UNDER THE ROSE!

ONE has full many lessons here to learn—
Especially if thoughtful eyes we turn
From the "most wicked world" unto that
class

Who for the *purest* of our Christians pass!

If you the modern Pharisee would find
Know that a certain *brand* is on his kind!
They boast of being pure as Alpine snows,
And *do* their many sins—*under the rose!*

Would you avoid the coward and the
sneak

Look out to shun this class of whom I
speak!—

And certain land-marks — one may not
forget—

Now as of old distinguishing that "set!"

They sit not in the open air to pray—
Only—they follow not that ancient way
Because so surely free from human
crimes—

Beyond even Pharisees of ancient times!

They are so holy—so *exceeding* good—
They keep their "distance," be it under-
stood,

From the great world's *conglomerate* of
evil—

Yet I would even shun them as the devil!

WELL-KNOWN CHARACTERS.

THEY close their eyes where'er the sky is
bright,

And all around is happy, calm and fair,
But when the sun of summer leaves their
sight

Their loud complaints would *overflow* the
air!

Have you not heard such boast—"I told
you so!"

They lie—these croakers! for they dared
not say

What might *too* much a mind of envy
show,

So long as notes of joy rang on your
way!

Seeing your right arm in those hours was
strong,
And quick and ready to give blow for
blow,
They held that vicious prattle — about
wrong—
Until they hoped your head, at last, lay
low!

Even donkeys kick at sick lions, we have
read—
But hint not at his faults in days of
strength!
A rat runs o'er a slain dog, it is said,
A worm crawls o'er a dead snake's
frightful length—

So, with a certain set of worldly souls,
They walk beside you when the sky is
gay,
But see, when storms arise, and thunder
rolls,
They pass you by,—and *take another*
way!

MUSING.—VIII.

ON A SLANDERER OF HIS KIND.

"How long will ye imagine mischief against any
man?"—PSALM lxii.

FULL many noble deeds will shrink from
light—
Full many brave things are in secret
done—
Full many sacrifices made for Right—
Nor blazoned—for the praise of *any*
one!

Surely ye might imagine *some* of these
Done for the love of God and not for
man—
Not merely such as thou and thine to
please.
A hint for you to treasure—if ye can!

We heard some boast of charity — 'tis
true—
A charity, it may be, to their own—
Who stand up, smirking, in the World's
broad view,
Too willing that their *goodness* should be
known!

Yet—when there others be that do the
same
They will discredit such with all their
might—
Sweet souls of charity! who don't think
shame
Of doubting others *ever* do the right!

Yes! the old class—it clingeth to earth
still—
Noted right plainly by the wise—the
shrewd—
Believing *good in self*—in all else *ill*,
A race of old and ever-more renewed!

WORDS OF WONDER!

How much of pleasure have those evil
hearts,
Who steep their hours in bitterness, I
wonder!
What joy have they in filling such vile
parts —
Dressed—one might call it—in unwhole-
some plunder!

Ghouls feast upon dead bodies, we are
told—
Their hours of merry-making—*midnight*
hours!—
They keep their festivals o'er churchyard-
mould!—
"Those others" — haunt our fairest,
sweetest bowers!

The loathsome tastes of one can never
hurt—
Their earthly bodies had bade life fare-
well—
Dragging the sentient through the mire
and dirt
Is quite another sort of tale to tell!—

A mortal hath been known to do a deed
Worse — even — than these evil shapes
could claim!
To coarsely stab—to make a worn heart
bleed,—
To throw vile dust at an untainted
name.

That soul loves feasting but on putrid
food—
It hath a foul and vitiated taste;

It turneth its dull eyes away from good,
To look on sin, on folly, and on waste!

A man, not seldom, seeks to steal the crown
Whose circlet round his brother's brow
may meet—
Learns that it fits not his, and casts it down,
And crushes it to dust with jealous feet!

STILL—THE OLD RACE!

A DREARY selfishness—a bitter spite—
Seems often deep within the heart of those
Who yet pretend to walk in holy light—
To look on wrong as men regard their foes!

Their time on sins of others' is bestowed—
Those sins seem always staring in their eyes,
So that they cannot even *find* the road
That winds beneath our sweeter, clearer skies!

The maggot, eating deep into the core
Of their own hearts, not one appears to note—
Nor yet the spreading ulcer — hidden sore—
The lies that stick not in each brass-lined throat!

An air of holiness—some seem to think,
Needs blow around the paths of those who preach
All "others" stand upon Hell's fatal brink,
And that *they* dwell on earth that truth to teach!

We play in modern times but ancient plays—
Still war for pride—for hate—for love of gold—
The sins enacted in these latter days
Have the same hue and—*flavour*, as of old!

A WELL-KEPT "UPPER CRUST!"

Yes! through the roll of many dreary years—
Nay—but the *most* through times of bitter tears,
Have some we know been ever on the watch
Some echo of distress and pain to catch,
Then make use of it in most evil ways
To others' detriment—to their own praise!

For jealousy, that most unworthy foe,
Comes from the "pure and holy" class,
we know!
For such as are more *sinless* than the rest,
Who, for the "wicked world" are much distressed—
Yet, by their own lives judged, seem to increase
Its days of woe and lessen those of peace!

Oh! with what care their masks will they adjust!
Keep quite unsoiled a certain "upper crust,"
Sparkling with sugar to resemble snow,
Hiding the unsweet fruits that lie below,
And ever swearing they are fresh and sweet,
Until—the world believes in the deceit!

A COMMON SIGHT.

To see the little to the platform come
To judge the great, is *quite* a common sight!
The voice of Folly cannot long be dumb,
But needs *screech* out, with all its little might!

The fly will judge the bull, in modern times,
The cat the tiger's fiercest deeds will weigh—
The fox will prattle of the lion's crimes,
The silly ass will mock the horse's neigh!

The worm upon the python's length pronounces,
The sparrow on the eagle's lofty flight,—
With much of self-conceit and feeble "bounces!"
The tale is one for ever true and trite.

The sprats will swarm around a mighty
 whale,
 Nor even seem to see its greater size!
 Yes! truly 'tis a strangely "old-world"
 tale,
 Repeated, endlessly, beneath our skies!

So will a little human being sit
 Upon the loftiest seat that he can find,
 And think he hath sufficient sense and
 wit
 To judge—not one—but *every* human
 mind!

"PERKED UP!"

"PERKED up" yes! but not with a "glit-
 tering grief,"
 Nor by a crown of the immortal bay,
 But—through a pharisaical belief
 That none on earth are holy as are they!

"Perked up" yes! "perked up" by the
 creed that holds
 None are so free from every spot, or
 stain,—
 A holy robe enfolds them in its folds,
 Of which 'twere well that Earth upheld
 the train!—

"Perked up" yes! perked up for us all to
 view,—
 Each life a life to imitate on earth—
 Around whose pathway all should roses
 strew,
 As some slight tribute to such saintly
 worth!

"Perked up" yes! but not by a noble
 scorn
 For aught within this world of vile and
 mean,
 But with a vanity of Satan born,
 To make some mark upon this mortal
 scene.

"Perked up" alas! full many dwelling
 here
 Do think they shall be valued by their
 kind
 Because they take the Pharisee's career,
 And know not they are selfish, deaf and
 blind!

TWO MIGHTY NEEDS.

THERE are for happiness two mighty
 needs;
Fulfilled the heart is raised to Heaven's
 own skies!—
 The monks of old, no doubt, held other
 creeds—
 Some—of earth's later years, know paths
 more wise!

He, who through luckless fate, hath only
 one,
 Who knows not of God-given human
 love,
 Though—looking towards the setting of
 the sun—
 He prays for yet a fairer life above—

He on whom shineth never Love's fair
 star,
 Shall tread this earth's broad path with
 blinded eyes—
 Before his vision is a fatal bar,
 In darkness and in ignorance he dies.

His life is as a flower unperfumed —
 fruits
 Without their riper sweetness—or a day
 Lit with no brightness—and where toads,
 or newts,
 Had all hours for their squabbles, or
 their play!

God grant that love, true love, shall ne'er
 forsake
 This world—but evermore be welcomed
 there—
 That man shall never, through her loss
 awake
 To find this realm but one of drear
 despair.

LOVE! LOVE!

LOVE! Love! in the fair summer time thy
 voice
 Singeth sweet music to thy sons and
 daughters;
 So all they that believe in thee rejoice,
 And gladly "cast their bread upon the
 waters."

Thy breath is as the very breath of flowers—

Thy song is as the song of happy bird—
Thy gentle steps re-echo through the hours,

And in low, running streams thy voice is heard.

Again — thy breath is as an old-world scent—

Thou art the essence of all precious things—

Thou art a generous spirit Heaven hath lent—

Too often one, alas! with angel wings.

Love! I will walk with thee beside thy streams —

And watch the light that o'er the water plays—

Love! in thy forests will I dream my dreams,

Through all the tender hours of summer days.

Love! I will look into thy sparkling eyes,
And I will watch thy planet rise at night—

Love! I will watch the moonlight of thy skies—

To me thou bringest glory, joy, and Light!

MUSING.—IX.

ON UNPLEASANT SOULS!

THEIR souls are gloomy and believe in woe,

And little else, in this drear world below;
To them it seemed the silly—foolish—vain—

Made up the multitude on Earth's broad plain—

The vicious filled, they said, the world—beneath

The stars — with their inheritance of death!—

And under skies of tempests—mists and tears,

Men trod the paths that led to darker spheres!

Grim madness — nay! all plenitude of crimes

Deepens, they cry, the shadows of our times—

The air is full of Want's most piteous wails,

And Mercy still her face of sadness veils—

While Innocence, with all her simple graces,

Seems now to have forsaken her old places—

The modest flowers of earth have passed away,

For the bright gauds of a more brazen day.

The gems of earth lie buried on rude shores—

Or on strange plains no traveller explores—

And we may well o'er their scant records weep—

While "charity" is dreaming, or asleep!

"O! sins of men!" they cry—"ye are so dark!

Thy very limits few, or none, can mark—

The earth is full of all we most despise—

Darkness below and shadows on her skies!"

FOUL SHAPES.

HATE, Calumny and Malice are foul shapes

Like Macbeth's witches—that come out in hail,

And snow—the shroud each withered figure drapes,

What time the rays of moon and stars shall fail.

In sunlight—when the earth is full of cheer,

When every rose upon its stem is bright,

When on the lily hath been dried the tear,
They pass away—they fade out of men's sight.

For when they love to haunt the wood, or plain,

'Tis as the rose and lily leaves are shed—

'Tis in the storm of lightning and of rain—

'Tis when the new lambs in the fold lie dead.

Not low and soothing words these witches
speak,
To suit the weary shadows of the hour,
But hateful lies upon the air they shriek,
That echo from the house-top and the
tower.

Yes! each, as bat, or owl, comes out by
night,
And keeps in shadow its *enormous*
brood—
One often indistinct to keenest sight,
That yet, as vampire, fattens on our
blood.

FROM THE DARKNESS TO THE LIGHT!

THOU grantest us but one experience—one,
Alone, on earth, O Life! it may be
short
Or long—but ere our only race is run,
'Twere well to treasure lessons thou hast
taught.

One is there that thou seemest last to
teach!—
The lesson of a kindly, hopeful view—
The wisdom even of charity to preach,
Although it freshens as Heaven's
brightest dew!

The thought that we have here but little
time
For proclamation of another's sin,
If we would purge *ourselves* of fault, or
crime,
And pardon for our own poor acts would
win.

The seeing that no thistle, tall and rank,
Grows on *our* land that we do not up-
root—
That adders may not coil upon *our* bank,
To sting a careless and unheeding foot—

Ah, yes! watch for the motes in thine own
eyes—
O fool!—lest they look only into night!
Cease thou thy dreary, discontented sighs—
*Look sometimes from the Darkness to the
Light!*

O! I HAVE THOUGHT—

O! I HAVE thought, as some in life shall
miss
A lover's noble trust and faithful kiss,
'Tis as the Esquimaux's pale, northern
eyes
Shine never with the warmth of southern
skies.

They feel no longing, deep within their
soul,
For brighter suns than brighten their chill
Pole—
They have no craving to behold the rose
That in a lover's fragrant garden blows—

Dark are their nights and pallid are their
days—
Full of much fog and melancholy haze—
But—they have known none sweeter, or
more fair,
Therefore feel they no shadow of despair.

We are as Nature framed us!—some are
made
To dwell in chilly and unsweetened
shade—
Whose feeble vision cannot catch the rays
That ever gild Love's warm and golden
ways—

For some do dwell on earth of whom we
note
The sweet song from the nightingale's full
throat
Falls on deaf ears—ah! pity them—all ye
Who sail, with beating hearts, o'er Love's
fair sea!

OF THE POOR SOUL WHO LATELY DECLARED THAT LOVE WAS "BALDERDASH!"*

GOD help that hapless soul!—if one feels
scorn,
Compassion also shall we feel as well—
To think that any unto earth is born
*To whom Love never her sweet tales
shall tell!*

* The *first* critic who came forward after the publication of "Poems of Love and Sorrow," recorded his opinion of "Love"—that it was—"BALDERDASH!"

Neither at noon—at night — nor summer's day

Comes tender Love to gild his heavy skies—

God help the loveless — taking his dull way

Without one look into earth's fairest eyes!

God help him—if Love never yet hath breathed

Her fragrant breath upon his flowerless vale—

Nor ever her warm arms hath round him wreathed

To tell in times of grief her faithful tale!

God help him—for the soul by Love touched not

Lives in this world to play no glorious part—

His shall be but a pale, unhealthy lot,

Knowing no warm throbs of the deeper heart.

God help him—e'en though he whom love shall miss,

Through the dull passage of his cheerless years,

And whose cold brow her lips shall never kiss,

Consoles himself that—*he knows not her tears!*

A MAN OF THE RIGHT SORT!

HE would not take the paths *their* footsteps trod—

Nor hold the same *enfeebled* views of God!—

He looked upon the puzzling world with eyes

That were at once beneficent and wise—

He chose to often walk the rougher land,

To hold to all who needed a strong hand—

He did not turn aside, with footsteps weak,

Where'er the path was difficult, or bleak.

He did not love the easier life they led,

Nor shrink from storms that gathered overhead—

His steps were bold—both on the hill and plain—

Nor called he life a dreary overstrain.

He did not think all souls but his were poor,

And shut to gentle charity the door—

'Twas rarely that he looked upon another As but an outcast in this world — not *brother*—

He did not think that God to him, alone,

Was gracious—to another gave a stone—

That he was free from every weight of sin—

And safe, alone, the Higher Life to win!

FAITH MISPLACED—I.

ENTHUSIASTIC in adherence—warm,

And true as she was warm, and dreaming never

That certain, so-called "friendships" bear no storm,

But in adversity depart for ever.

So strong in faith that from that faith ensued

Disaster—disappointment and defeat—

Such faith, once lost, can never be renewed—

Its vows are profitless—nor longer sweet—

No! *Love* was never faithless, but the vows

Were paid by one who worshipped, at false shrines,

The wreath, so boldly placed on Love's pure brows,

Only the cold hand of the worldling twines.

One who had praised that wreath knew not its leaves

Were simply artificial—nothing less!—

Only—the imitation that deceives,

Brings with it often Love's unfeigned distress.

Once faded shall its freshness ne'er return—

No! never in this mortal life, I ween—

'Tis well such worthless "flowers" as
these to burn,
Nor even let their "memories be green!"

FAITH MISPLACED.—II.

YES! they would gladly *now* be friends—
no doubt—
Doth not the sun shine brightly on the scene!—
While what some call the rabble and the
rout
Of troubles seem as though they had not
been!

It may be that these fatuous beings dream
The past—the bitter and the faithless
past—
Is as a dead leaf, floating down the
stream,
To watch—at first, but to forget—at last!

Are not our days the days of calmness
now?—
Do we not hear once more the lark's gay
trill,—
Hath not the mist rolled from the moun-
tain's brow?
Is not the thunder's angry muttering
still?

Do not soft mosses spring around our
feet—
Have not our trampled flowers revived
again—
Are not the roses in our hedges sweet,
Now they have shaken off the heavy rain?

The hour for mean unfaithful souls hath
come!—
For sweet recall of vows, vowed long
before!
And these would gladly seek a *smiling*
home
And act the friendship of the past once
more!

FAITH MISPLACED.—III.

I UNDERSTOOD them—even in early days—
But only to a point!—nor could believe
That they would choose to walk such
"old-world" ways,
Such as no *after-marches could retrieve!*

Wisdom is good — whatever hour she
comes—
Aye! "better late than never" — men
have said!—
But here she seeketh a fool-ridden home—
To leave, as one lamenting o'er her
dead!

The fortune that mean Folly there hath
made
Shall leave behind full many a grim
proof—
The trusting spirits that she hath betrayed
Can meet no more beneath the same
mean roof.

A "past" of faith can never be recalled!—
Some bitter hearths too vividly are
known—
Around a heart that was betrayed, is
walled
A heavy wall that cannot be o'erthrown!

Life is but short—and none have here re-
traced
With ease the steps that were with
rashness taken—
And all her flowers may run to very
waste
Unless the soul to wisdom shall awaken!

TO A SLANDERER.

AYE!—do you never, in the silent night,
Remember what your bitter lips have
said,
What reputations you have sought to blight,
The reckless falsehoods, without con-
science, spread!

Do you forget that even while *we* were
saying
The kindest things for you that Truth
could say,
You—every honest trust basely betraying,
Were sowing *endless* lies upon our way?

Can you recall—recall without *one* pang
Of shame and of compunction—how thy
lies
Were even as a serpent's deadly fang,
Whose poison spreads *after* the creature
dies!

Did not your unsuspecting victim give
But kindly words and actions in return—
Nor dreamt so vile a thing as you could
live—

And that so foul a fact was *hers* to
learn?

Aye! 'twas a sad and melancholy hour
When first thy face was seen in honest
light,
Even though it took from thee thy devil's
power
And bade thee henceforth shrink back
from our sight!

I DO NOT CARE.

TO A FORMER, BUT FAITHLESS, FRIEND.

I DO not care to ponder, o'er again,
Old questions of the past, nor to re-try
Past causes—past disputes—it is in vain—
For ever hath the hour for this gone
by!

Some principles have been right strongly
learnt—

By which I stand with firmness, not with
pride—

Some lessons on my heart full well are
burnt—

By these in later life I shall abide.

Shall he who knows the desert hathi no
spring

Again retrace his steps upon her sands—
His weary form on the hot ground to
fling,

While lifting unto Heaven imploring
hands?

Shall he who knows the lily cannot bloom
In the bleak mountain gorges, seek it
there—

Might he not search as well an ancient
tomb,

To find, therein, still roses fresh and
fair?

Waste not of life its not o'er many hours,
For ever straining after shadows—thou
Had'st better use thy but restricted powers
Not on the years that yet may come—
but *now!*

STINGING NETTLES.

I HAVE known people fill with their com-
plaints

The air they breathe, as though they had
been saints

Sent here to judge, or to improve the
rest—

Yet each with sores in his, or her, own
breast!

Truly a common thing—cases well known
Not limited to paths called—the World's
own—

It is to blind men's eyes—and little more—
They loudly *others'* frailties deplore!

Our nettles cannot thrive without their
stings!

And so it sometimes is with — human
things!

They might seem insignificant—they think,
Did men not at their very contact shrink!

Let him who hath been stung, *these weeds*
avoid—

In his own garden let them flourish not—
They are not evils carelessly destroyed,
Their roots may even *intersect* the spot.

For I have oft been stung! and it is worth
Again repeating—even in fair sunshine,

Avoid the "nettleplaces" of the earth,
And let them find no place in home of
thine!

A RESOLUTION!

(LINES TO A TREACHEROUS FRIEND.)

THOU vile-lipped one—enter these gates
no more—

Thou hast been tried full long, and I am
weary—

The day of pardon at my hands is o'er;—
And even if I put to thee the query,

The one grim question — would'st thou
wrong me more?—

I could not trust thine answer—thou hast
lied

So often, thou must needs be now denied!

For thou, I know, hast played so vile a
part,

So villainous—and yet of thine own choice,

Thou hast so cold, so icy cold a heart,
It is not open to compassion's voice!
Yet, though so dull, hast wit enough, they
say,
To lead who trusts thee, blindfold, thine
own way!

Go! then—as I have said—nor yet again
Let there be clasp of hand between us
twain—

I gave thee rope enough—too much, I fear—
What thou hast done with it is but too
clear!

Once more—depart! I would forget thy lies—
And, if thou can'st, grow humble and—
grow wise!

TO CERTAIN FOOLISH WOMEN.

YE foolish women, who so sweetly dream
Of a vile world in which *but ye* shine
fair—

Ye are but straws—that, drifting down the
stream,

Go on your little ways — *whence* — who
shall care?

Feeble the paths that ye in life shall take,
Having of wit and power the smallest
store—

And suffering little, save for your own
sake,

Ye are earth's gnats, and ye are little
more!

Ye have a spiteful sting—a shrewish song,
Higher in note than any song of bird—
The *beetle's* hum may be more full and
strong,

But far above it thy sharp *ping* is heard!

It is our brighter spots ye haunt the most—
Though with glad things ye have in-
deed, no kin!

And oft the dwellers in fair woods can
boast

Neither an untried ear, nor spotless
skin!

For ye—ye mean and restless things of
spite,

Do trouble often our most sunny ways,
And would, above all other things, delight
To fill with weary discontent our days!

STRONG IN PROFESSIONS.

So strong in certain loud Professions, few
Of those who yet full long their pathways
knew

Could dream that when the moment came
to try them

Despite that loudness, they would even—
deny them!

This made the trouble! — yes! but few
could dream

That all their principles were made to
seem—

And were as froth—that *dissipates* at once,
Before a stronger breath than hath the
dunce!

Aye! few more utterly deceive the sight,
With robes that seem and yet that are not
white—

With crowns of roses, never fresh with
dew,

For in unwholesome bowers these roses
grew!—

And little on this earth shall more prevail
Than mental blindness—'tis an old-world
tale—

But one, alas! that ever more shall be
Repeated here—unto Eternity!

Aye! mental blindness! doubtless doth the
fool

Speak truth—when he declareth himself
wise

Above all men—nor knows himself the
tool

Of those of stronger brains and keener eyes!

MUSING.—X.

ON ONE MRS. Z—!

SHE had a small and uninstructed mind—
Her judgment and her vision both seemed
blind!

Her life was narrowly and closely bounded
By selfishness, and by mean views
surrounded—

Living her days well “edged-in” by con-
ceit,

She thought her feet more clean than
others' feet,

And held the faith that few could ever be
Upon this earth so "pure" and good as
she!

She seemed infected by this sore disease—
This love of passing life in deadly ease,
Whilst looking down with scorn on others'
toil—

And treating men as cumberers of the
soil!—

Taking in earth's great troubles little
part—

Daring, as God, to judge both soul and
heart,

And—quite untouched by charity's warm
glow,

Passing harsh sentences on all below!—

God knows that there are some upon this
earth

Marked out by very vanity from birth—

Seated, as Pharisees, in seeming light,

Yet—on the paths that lead men into
night!

TO ONE—BOTH UNLUCKY AND —DROLL!

AYE!—human love to *you*—unlucky soul,
Is even an "idiot's" subject—so you
say—

You figure in a light so very—*droll*

It almost drives all pitying thoughts
away!

Aye!—you have never seen Love's glorious
face!

You poor old thing!!—for you must
needs be old—

You come of some mean, ignominious race,
Of whom no noble legends e'er were
told!

I speak to you beside the Sea—and Love
Is full as broad—as powerful—as deep!
A mirror for the stars that shine above,
And, as the sea—with rocks both grand
and steep.

The Ocean hath her times of fearful
power,
And Death may darkly on her bosom
lie—

So also, hath full many a glorious hour,
Sleeping at peace beneath a tranquil
sky!—

Unhappy creature—beat that empty breast
Of thine—and pray for sweeter, clearer
light!

Thou art as one by evil fate oppressed,
Who hath a hateful veil before his
sight!

AYE! WHO ARE THEY—

AYE! who are they, who dare to boldly
claim

A free right to condemn — if not
advise?

And why, and through what works—
assume the name

Of the philosopher — the shrewdly-
wise?

Surely they must *some* title have to preach
Of the unworthiness of modern
ways!

Surely they must have *some* strange right
to teach

Their race to see the darkness of their
days?

Is it a lamb that takes the wolf to
task—

A guileless lamb—*by spot of sin un-
stained?*

Or may it even be a wolf, we ask,
Whose wisdom hath by *evil* means been
gained?

What wars with sin and sinners have they
fought?—

What deer saved from the savage tiger's
den?—

What evidence give they of honours
bought

By noble service to their fellow-men?

Is it not ludicrous?—these little flies

Thus use their hours to make a peevish
noise—

And "buzz" in tones so ludicrously—
wise

About the great world's failures, griefs
and joys?

THE PATH OF SUCH AS
THESE!

BUT one may guess the path of each of these!—

The shrinking from all brave and open strife—

The care of its own self—the love of ease—
The self-praise, for its own "sweet style of life!"

The draughts of water from an impure stream—

The swallowing of the oil of much self-praise—

The growth of often an enormous beam
In its own vision—broadening with its days—

The climbing up upon the judgment seat,
To cry aloud the faults and sins of others—

The ever prating of its own clean feet,
While pointing out the clay upon a brother's—

The showing that, upon a neighbour's plot

Of land the grains are scarcely as *their* grains!—

The—"Lord! I thank Thee—seeing I am not

As others, living on life's vicious plains!—"

Unto such evil ways some here are born!—
Yes! such the paths too often seen on earth—

A life of such contempt one needs must scorn—

Did one not feel that pity stifled mirth!

TO CERTAIN SLANDERERS OF
THEIR KIND.

IIA! have they known *no* woman, whose sweet eyes

Were ever bright with faithful love and praise?—

No friend — whose counsel, tender — thoughtful—wise—

Came as a comfort in life's darker days?

Oh! have they known no man of lofty power—

Of true and noble heart—straightforward brain?

Who shone—a light—in Life's most gloomy hour—

Whose strong, warm heart upheld—in grief, or pain!

Poor souls—we pity them—who may forget
That such yet dwell by *other* household hearths—

Who—blind and ignorant—may not even fret

Because none such shall cheer their earthly paths.

For there be those that know not what they miss,

Either of pleasure, or of noble strife,
And one who never felt a lover's kiss

May well scoff at the passions of this life!

Truly is theirs a dreary, blighting creed,
Founded upon a mean soul's loneliness—

Greatly we pity them — aye! they must need

More pity than can human lips express!

MUSING.—XI.

ON LOVE'S SCEPTIC!*

HE thinks there are no Jacobs in these days—

No lover who could serve for seven years long

And go with trust and patience on his ways,

His heart of constancy for ever strong—

As he has spoken not as others speak,
And with experience that is all his own,

It may be well he doth no farther seek,
To find his soul so dark—*so left alone!*

It might be cruel to tell him of that glow
Of life, that glory quite beyond all speech,

That ecstasy that he shall never know,
Or e'er *hath* known—that Love alone shall teach!

* See note, p. 435.

So let him live in darkness—on his face
Shall never fall a glory straight from
Heaven—

On earth his feeble, little landmarks
trace,
For nothing more to him may here be
given.

For he no stronger marks on earth shall
make

Who loves not even the *dream* of
brighter spheres—

Let him his dreary pilgrimage, then, take,
He lives—he dies!—*his grave shall know
no tears!*

LOOKING BACK.

It gives one an odd feeling—to look back
And see in what *poor* natures one be-
lieved—

To learn one's steps were on so *worn* a
track!

Truly a soul right easily deceived!

Mother and daughter—*dear*ly alike!

And thinking it a very little thing
Another woman to betray—to strike—
And insults in the face of grief to fling!

An oft-told tale—no doubt—yes! nothing
new—

One of the past, as of these present
days—

A lesson learnt by myriads, not by few—

A blighting shadow, falling on worn
ways—

Each deems that by some wisdom of his
own,

Or even by faithful trust, through many
years,

*He shall escape these wrongs, if he —
alone!*

And knows at first no troubled thoughts
and fears!

So shall it be—if but for one short time,
At least, in which one needs to travail
here,

Our knowledge to acquire of grief or
crime—

Ere death shall surely close the brief
career!

SOME PEOPLE.

YES! there are people whom you cannot
love,

Nor yet esteem—for all they do, or say,
No stronger feelings of your heart can
move,

To you they are as sculptures or cold
clay.

Not that they lack profession—demonstra-
tion—

Nay! in that matter even go too far!—
Or are not of this century's creation,
And don't chime in with things—just as
they are!

Yon plain appears as snow above—beneath
Are plants and roots, that have been left
to rot—

So on a Death's head you may see a
wreath,

But underneath the roses—ah! *look not!*

It is the fair outside—the tale of old—

White sepulchres! of which long since
men read—

The brass that shines as brightly as pure
gold—

The leaves of autumn even bright when
dead—

Lips—oily lips—one knows them but too
well—

Lips that too oft the innocent beguile—

Lips — oily lips — what lies do they not
tell!—

And still retain their oil and still they
smile!

A MISSING GEM!

SHE was simply a tradesman's wife—friend
—don't you see—

And the folly of the matter seemed to
be

In assuming that she had her duty done
Far better than — both *yourselves* and —
every one!

She was one of the crowds of earth—both
weak and vain,

With the full conviction weaker souls
possess

Of being *exceptional*—both in the brain
And soul, and a creature all of us should
bless!

There are endless of such souls born unto
earth,

Oh! enough to drive our angels to
despair—

Of a class that quite believe in their own
worth,

Which they love to *trumpet* loudly on
the air!

Oh! strong in their scorn of the big world's
shameless vice,

Of its reckless wars, disturbances, and
strife—

But the sweet Humility, beyond all price,
That pearl of the crown of a true
Christian's life—

Aye!—*this* was the thing they lacked the
most—for them

It seemed as a thing of quite o'ervalued
worth—

And yet it is even the fairest, sweetest gem
That ever adorns the troubled sons of
Earth.

STILL—OF ALL CREATURES OF THIS EARTH—

STILL—of all creatures of this earth, *most*
vile,

Are those that seek to blast another's
name—

Are those whose practice is to stab—and
smile—

Impervious both to pity and to shame!

They nothing benefit by what they steal
From some most simple, unoffending
brothers—

Unless it may be by the joy they feel,
In doing injury to those envied
“others!”

They even might grieve if *good* therefrom
should come!

'Twould meet no wish—'tis possible—of
theirs!—

To them the voice of Charity is dumb,
And Mercy?—these are Heaven's, not
man's affairs!

This thought that *others* have what they
have missed

Is the indulgence of mere human spite;
But then their *moral* nature is a mist—

They think the Best belongs to them
of right!

Many of these about the world you meet,
Unpleasant weeds upon our earthly
land—

They have an air of infinite conceit,
That marks their brows as with a
Devil's brand!

AN UNWISHED-FOR WISDOM!

ONE may look on one's enemies with eyes
With which one oft regards an unloved
dish!

For through the taste of it thou hast grown
wise,

Although that wisdom came not by thy
wish!

And of the virtues of the cooks that mixed
The “mess,” from various herbs upon
their shelf,

And various flavours on each viand *fixed*,
Thou hast learnt more than of the dish
itself!

Taste, here, the slanderer's soup of rotten
leeks!

Here — the hot pepper of a spiteful
hand—

And here a bit of pig's unwholesome
“cheek” —

Here the rank fungus of an unswept
land!

Here fruit that hath a maggot at its core—
And here the strong flesh of an “an-
cient” goose!

If thou hast lost thy courage *taste no
more—*

Meantime its flavour shall be long to
lose!

But thou wilt never more forget—one fears,
That *dish of slander* that was so—*un-
sweet!*

And if again thy nose it ever *nears*
Thy steps will quickly sound a smart
retreat!

EVIL KNOTS!

OUR scandalmongers often live in --
 "knots!"—

Therefore we shun all—when we know
 their *kind*—

Avoiding straying into those vile spots
 Where blows so biting and so harsh a
 wind.

Yet—if one looks down on a nest of
 snakes,

Or under flowers, or where the sweet
 grass bends,

You oft may see some wily one awakes,
 And creeps abroad, for certain evil ends!

So will our scandalmongers leave their
 homes

At times, for other fields and "pastures
 new,"

Each one into a fresher neighbourhood
 comes,

Where skies are stormy, or where skies
 are blue.

'Tis all the same to these, can they but
 creep

Into a home of either grief, or pride—
 Into a home where some poor soul may
 sleep—

Nor know what "things" are coiling
 by her side—

And all is food for their vile stomachs—
 still

As in old times, they love the fairest
 fruit—

Where there is warmth such bring the
 deadliest chill!—

And Love to poison—is *an old pursuit!*

AGAIN—WELL-KNOWN

CHARACTERS.

AND yet are also those that keep away
 From you, in times of happiness, of
 joy,—

They have no care to see you happy—they
 Wish for some storm your sunshine to
 destroy.

We say but truth in saying that *some* scowl
 To see upon your brow the glow of
 pleasure—

And they would rather far that winds were
 foul,

That darkness might be yours in fullest
 measure.

The joy—the radiance—that seems never
 theirs,

At least from them to beam—they would
 see changed

Into the heavy clouds of griefs and cares—
 When they will boast of friendship un-
 estranged!

Yes! *credit* claim, that *friendship* bids
 them seek

Thy sorrowful, or thy o'ershadowed
 home!

And words of sweetest "patronage" will
 speak—

And plume themselves that they in
 sorrow come!

Oh! happy now—seeing that they appear
 To stand upon far higher ground than
 those

That cared for you, they say, when skies
 were clear—

But sought you never in the time of
 woes!

WAS IT NOT AN ERROR?

TO A SLANDERER.

YET—was it not an error on thy part
 To slander in that *very* reckless way—
 To throw at random that most poisoned
 dart,

To aim so ill at thy intended prey?

We know! seeing the drooping of the
 flower,

The blight that for a while seemed on
 each leaf,

Thou did'st exult, in that most bitter hour,
 To think that thou might'st bring it
 fresher grief!

So did'st thou breathe on it thy loathsome
 breath,

Full of the seeds of hatred, of despair—

So did'st thou hope that this might bring
it death,
Or leave it only what—might taint the
air!

Instead of which, with *over-burning* zeal,
You struck that plant with reckless,
random blows,—

Alas! that you have not the joy to feel
You could not, did not—*aggravate* its
woes!!

The leaves that seemed as withered, in
your view,
Touched for the moment by an eastern
blight,
May in a fairer hour their strength renew—
And spring again in late, yet sweetest,
light.

TIME! THOU DOST TEACH US MUCH—

TIME! thou dost teach us much in thine
own way!—

Thou showest us how friendships shall
betray—

Who shall forget the vows his lips have
passed

At hours when skies are gloomy and o'er-
cast—

Thou teachest us the folly—Time!—to rest
Our faith on those that glibly do protest
The hour shall come not—though thy sun
may set—

When oaths so warmly sworn they shall
forget!—

Thou teachest us what even *enormous*
weight

Of vanity may rule another's state—
And how mean things are done for them
that pay

Their debts in fulsome flatteries of the
day!

Thou teachest us how some will play the
part

Of but the loving—of the *pious* heart,
Yet whom the day of trouble may disclose
To be one of thy most unfeeling foes!—

But thou, O Time!—shall teach us some-
thing more,

That the true friend turns *never* from thy
door—

But through all tempests shall beside thee
stand

For ever staunch and faithful—heart and
hand!

MUSING.—XII.

PRESENT.

TRUE—I would not that they awoke again
Those memories of a past and bitter pain—
True — I would not they entered, ever
more,

What, I have said, *to them* is a closed
door!

I would all memories of them now might
die,

In the sweet calmness of Life's autumn
sky—

This cannot be so long as even a sound
Of their harsh voices breaks the peace
around.

We may forget our wrongs, so that *they*
come

No more into the calm of this late home —
For here they are suggested not, and
all

Linked with their memories into shadows
fall.

Now is, of later peace, the silver dawn,—
What shadows are, sleep on a flower-
banked lawn—

And I would fain all memories now were
lost,

Of what of evil had my footpaths crossed.

Despised, and in the gloom they now shall
sleep,

So long as they without our precincts
keep—

Our skies are calm, nor longer overcast—
Let the dark storms sleep in the weary
past!

THOU ART A TANGLE, LIFE!

THOU art a tangle, Life! in many views—
Full of strange complications art thou
here—

A wilderness of flowers of varied hues,
A haunted plain of anguish, hope, and
fear—

Thou art a tangle, Life! to many minds,
In which men often leave the safer
paths—

Disturbed by voices of disastrous winds,
Or lured by ghost-lights to unwholesome
hearths—

Thou art a tangle, Life! to many souls—
Whose twisted threads fill even with
affright—

And now, o'erhead, thy thunder darkly
rolls—
And lightning, only, gilds our gloomy
night—

Thou art a tangle, Life! to many hearts—
And often, from his broken, fevered
sleep,

The conscience-troubled sleeper wildly
starts,
Only to veil his eyes again and weep—

Thou art a tangle, Life! to many brains—
A thing of mist, of misery, of blight—
Wherein his eyes but uselessly man
strains
To see the coming of the God of Light.

MUSING.—XIII.

OH! truly wert thou, Life! a time of
sorrow,

A melancholy course for some to run,
If not for the sweet hope of the To-
morrow,
With which men watch the setting of
thy sun!

Oft as we watch the fading of the leaf,
The moon that sets in storm upon the
wave,

We pause, o'erwhelmed with bitterness
and grief,
To strew the flowers upon some loved
one's grave!

We weep o'er some long-cherished, tender
hope,
Now buried dark and deep beneath the
sod—

And as in darkness, or in mist we grope,
Our feeble hands grasp no divining-
rod!—

Not until later years we sometimes know—
With wonder that is terrible at times—
Of the volcano underneath the snow,
Of paths of deadly errors, linked with
crimes—

Not until later years we sometimes learn
The value even of gems that we have
kept,

As to the parting sun of life we turn
From all that past we have so sadly
wept!

A PASSING AGREEABLE THEORY!

'Tis possible, as countless cycles roll,
Hell loosens from her ever fiery chains
Full many of her lost despairing souls,
And sends them back once more, to
earth's vexed plains!

And when triumphant, they return, they
bring
Of souls from earth a passing, heavy
load—
Into the "burning lake" their burdens
fling,
And go again back to the "upper"
road!

It is a pretty legend, there's no doubt!—
Grim—grim—and full of doubt, if not
despair—

Yet one that earth can scarcely do with-
out,
Or—she might have of blame a double
share!

Moreover it may be that, from above
Are sent far other messengers of fate—
Angels of pity, charity, and love
May come, in mercy, straight from
Heaven's own gate.

The world is swept, at times, by Hell's dire
blast—
And there dwell many here whom it
o'erwhelms—

Yet, when the bitterness of death is
past
Joy may be found in Heaven's eternal
realms!

REFLECTIONS OF ONE LONG CALUMNIATED.

THANK Heaven that, shrinking from the
fair, bright eyes
Of Love, mean liars now creep out of
sight—

They whisper—but no longer *shout* their
lies

Upon the unsweet air of their delight!—

Shall they come ever more into my life,
Each late—or earlier—page to stain with
blots,—

Endeavour still to breed disunion—strife—?
Aye! for the leopard cannot change its
spots!

And will they spread their lies *after* the
breath

Of life hath sought far other realms than
ours?

Aye!—and though they reach not the ear
of death

They yet may blight some of fair
Memory's flowers.

It is the fate of all who shall essay
To climb the mountain and forsake the
plain,

They stand out in the clearer light of day,
A mark for Slander's bitter hand to
stain—

Oh! but the soul is in a newer land
Where rust shall not corrupt, nor moths
destroy—

It *may* be—one of an immortal band,
And filled with an eternity of joy!

YET—ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR THE BEST!

YET—all things work together for the
best—

And wrong is of the stronger soul a test!
Throughout all bitter fights and conflicts,
still

“Educing good” out of the “seeming
ill”!

The fragile plant that bears no wintry wind
Shall leave no charming memories behind!
Upon its life men placed but little store—
A sigh is sometimes breathed for it—no
more!

The noble oak may have its branches torn,
Even by such foes as it regards with
scorn—

Yet still remains the Oak — however
bruised!

And one to which no honour is refused!

And so with many a dweller on life's soil—
He lives, encompassed both by storm and
toil—

Yet — having much of honour, strength,
and worth,

His records shall be worthy of God's earth.

The poorer plants may hide them from the
wrath

That beats upon full many a noble path—
But they may live, or die—men little
care—

Each is, at best, a *very mean* affair!—

Yes! all things work together for the best—
And wrong is of the stronger soul a test!
Throughout all bitter fights and conflicts,
still

“Educing” good out of the “seeming
ill.”

CLAY OF THE EARTH!

(CONTRASTS.)

GOD knoweth! if some hours of earth
looked dark,

And nothing therein seemed as sweet and
fair;

On others, hath been set so fair a mark
Their joy was all a mortal's soul could
bear!

Ah, yes! when even to live, to breathe—
was bliss!—

As though earth shone with Heaven's
divinest light—

As though it knew but Love's ecstatic kiss,
And nothing or of sorrow, or of blight.

That ecstasy is only known to those
Whom Love hath smiled upon and
treated well! —

Who know the deeper beauty of the rose,
And of the snowy lily's fragrant bell.

And those to whom Love's legends have
been told

Henceforth a sweeter, newer life shall
live—

And Life for them shall shine with lines
of gold—

With joy beyond what earthly pleasures
give.

For that poor mortal upon whom the
breath

Of love hath never breathed—what shall
we say!—

From those with whom he dwelt he goes
to death,

Clay of the earth to join again the clay!

AGAIN—

(CONTRASTS).

IF I have been down into Sorrow's Hell—
If I have known the depths of Life's

despair,

So have I known more joy than lips can
tell—

When Heaven's own smile seemed light-
ing up the air!

If I have known earth's dark and blighting
shade—

If I have been where vipers stung my
feet,

So have I also into sunlight strayed,
And rested where the violet beds were
sweet!

If I have wandered under darkened skies,
So have I seen the sun—the moon arise—

And sail across an atmosphere so fair
I felt that angels, only, floated there!

If I have known what northern winds may
cost—

The rose-buds blighted by untimely frost—

If I have seen destroyed the early fruit—

The strawberry beds infested by the newt—

So have I heard sweet birds of summer
sing—

And seen the butterfly of shining wing,

So have I known the voice of praise and
love,

The smile of Heaven that gilds us from
above!

MUSING.—XIV.

O' SUMMER EVES!

LOW-VOICED are ye—ye winds of summer
eves—

Each passing breath of peace and sweet-
ness tells,

Of tender whispers to the rose's leaves,
Of gentle toying with the lily's bells.

Aye! telling secrets of the dewy flowers,
Of apple-blossoms falling from the trees,

Of jessamine wreaths that, twining o'er thy
bowers,

Yet wave, obedient to the fitful breeze—

Thy woods are lit by light from distant
spheres,

O eve! by rays of the mild, yellow moon,
That glisten on the night-flower's tender
tears—

Tears that lament thy hours shall pass
so soon—

Sweet notes from even the sweetest of thy
birds

Come clearer, stronger, as the light
departs—

That stir us thrillingly as love's own words,
And echo—ever echo in our hearts—

Oh! I am grateful for thy deepening veil,
Oh! night!—through which thy Queen

so softly gleams—

While Love repeats her never-weary tales,
And dreams again her ever-glowing
dreams!

AYE! THOUGH THY YOUTH

IS O'ER.

FAIR art thou — Love! aye! though thy
youth is o'er—

Thy holly wreath for evermore is green—
Though round thy brow may roses twine
no more

Still starlight, straight from Heaven, is
thereon seen!

Years bring a greater calmness to thy
brow—

And a more steadfast light into thy
gaze—

More noble, if less gay and young, art
thou—

More majesty lights up thy lighter days—

Thy bonds may even be stronger than of
yore—
Thy flowers shall have the violet's tender
hue—
For never is thy glory past and o'er
For him who once thy depths of passion
knew—

Thou art thyself—when standing by our
tomb—
Thou dost maintain thine own despite of
death—
Fearless when even the sky is full of
gloom,
Glowing, beneath the frozen Arctic
breath—

Thy bonds no earthly hand shall ever
break—
No power, however strong, thy banners
furl—
Thou wilt not leave me!—thou wilt ne'er
forsake
One who hath prized thee as life's
greatest pearl!

THE NOTES OF LATER DAY.

TURN we then from the darkness to the
rays
Of light that fall so sweetly on our path—
Hear now the voice of truth, the voice of
praise,
Not the harsh tones of envy and of
wrath!

Let now Hate's bitter echoes die away—
No longer even thy passing scorn pro-
voke—
Hear now the sweeter notes of later day,
The swallow's twitter not the raven's
croak.

Fair is the sunset in our woods of pine—
And with the paling of its purple glow
Note we the moonlight on the fir-stems
shine,
The dew that sparkles on the grass
below—

There is a solemn feeling of earth's
peace—
A peace that is not lifeless, but
sublime—

Through which a murmur sounds that
shall not cease,
The murmur of the flowing tide of time.

Oh! but a few short years—a few short
years!—
Full of much troubled joy—of many
tears—
We pass from earth—while some we love
remain,
Nor shall we visit here our loved again!—

THE FATE OF GENIUS.

IF but the merest thread shall here
divide
The Genius from the madman, as some
say,
That "thread" may grow into a beam!—
as wide
As between Heaven and Hell—differing
as night from day!

The link may scarce seem plain to *common*
eyes
That cannot read the movements of great
brains—
So used are they to gaze into mean skies
A flash of stronger light *their* little wit
o'erstrains!

It must be so in days in which men
live;
The great shall be thought mad—eyes
see not clearly
The gift of nobler height that Heaven may
give,
If it be seen too plainly—aye! and seen
too *nearly*!

Distance may "lend enchantment to the
view,"
And noble mountains of Olympian size
May melt away into the distant blue,
Nor will they rise, methinks, to meet a
wanderer's eyes!

Was there a poet yet of wondrous gaze,
Looking beyond, to bring his visions
near,
But that he was thought *mad* in his own
days,
Because—his noble height was too great
and too near!

TRUST NOT! TRUST NOT!

(A MISTAKE.)

TRUST not! trust not! the heart that trusts
shall suffer—

The storms are bitter that shall sweep
his skies—

Trust not! trust not—thy path may be the
rougher,

Yet but through sorrow shall thy life
grow wise

Trust not! trust not! although is trust full
sweet,

It can but bring thee gall—to end de-
light—

The paths of earth are darkened by deceit,
And serpents twist across them—day
and night.

Trust not! trust not! In olden times they
said

The heart of man was evil at the core—
Lies only are not uttered by the dead
Hath been the lesson taught in ancient
lore!

Trust not! trust not! that trust thy heart
might break—

Thou may'st regret the day when thou
wert born—

As from a fatal slumber wilt awake
To find thy past a thing to loathe and
scorn—

Trust not! trust not!—go forward to the
end,

Believe all men are false — all women
lie—

On no one earthly let thy hopes depend,
Then undeceived and clear of vision die!

TRUST ON! TRUST STILL!

(A CORRECTION.)

TRUST on! trust still—far better find deceit
Than hurt thy soul by one unworthy
thought,

One vile suspicion of the true and sweet,
For then shall wisdom be but dearly
bought.

Trust on! trust still—believe him not less
strong
Who hath mistaken sometimes his career

Than shall be he who lives in dread of
wrong,
Who ever walks with wariness and fear.

Trust on! trust still—although a foe shall
lie,

And fill thy path with trouble and dismay,
Another hath a clear and honest eye,
Another walks a straight and simple
way.

Trust on! trust still—nor deem all souls
alike,

Nor fear thou shalt not meet with *noble*
foes,
Because some cowards shall in darkness
strike—

Because some liars trouble thy repose—

Trust on! trust still—and rest may yet be
thine

Thou may'st emerge from sorrow and
from gloom—

Peace on thy later, calmer path shall
shine,

And Love lay down the roses on thy
tomb!

THE TINY FLOWER.

THERE was a tiny flower, in days now
gone,

A small blue flower, beyond all others
dear—

Yes! nothing but a tiny flower, yet one
Pressed by the kiss, discoloured by the
tear—

A world, ah me! a world was in that
flower,—

A world outside itself, a world of grief—
That spread out far beyond its native
bower,

Alas! despair had spoken in each leaf—

Wherefore so many moonlit nights it slept
Upon a restless heart shall no one tell—

Nor why its owner often o'er it wept,
Nor how it worked, in after times, its
spell—

A talisman of old, but one no more—
Now only dust—still sweet, though dust
of death

Dead—dead as are the days now gone
before,
All withered by Time's cold and steady
breath—

Yes! but a tiny flower, of days now gone,
A small, blue flower, beyond all others
dear—

Ah! nothing but a tiny flower—yet one
Pressed by Love's kiss, discoloured by
Love's tear!

GONE—GONE FROM US.

TEARS—*lakes* of tears in later life we
shed—

They fall from sleepless eyes, from eyes
that burn—

Wept for the loved ones that have joined
the dead,

Gone — gone from us! and never to
return.

The fair, frail lily, broken by a breath
Of bitter wind, is drifting down the
stream—

Ere long arrested by the rock of death—
Its beauty henceforth nothing but a
dream—

The glorious roses that young Hope had
raised,

With every petal colour-full and sweet,
So passionately worshipped—painted—
praised—

They die—they die around his very
feet!—

All into utter darkness passed away!
Leaving an atmosphere of dreary
grey—

Sad echoes only linger on the air,
Full of the utterance of the heart's
despair—

So—*lakes* of tears in later life we shed—
They fall from sleepless eyes, from eyes
that burn—

Wept for the loved ones that have joined
the dead—

Gone — gone from us! and never to
return.

ECHOES AND MEMORIES.

TENDER, soft and low
Come back to me some voices of past
years,
Tears o'er their faded memories gently
flow,
Although may joy still sparkle through
those tears—

Youth's happy dreams return;—
Those shadowy lanes where lovers
breathe their sighs!
Those dew-drops sparkling on the forest
fern!—
Those violets smiling as the stars arise!

Echoes of love's sweet tones
Fall yet again upon our listening ears—
Full of that happiness Love—only—owns,
That links itself so strongly with her
tears.

Now memories only!—yet
How thrilling, even in these later
hours!—
Too thrilling that a lover shall forget,
As he unties a bunch of faded flowers!—

Ah! tender, soft, and low,
Come back to me some voices of past
years,
Tears o'er their faded memories gently
flow,
If some sweet joy still sparkles through
those tears.

STILL—UNDER THE STARS!

AYE! glowing, sweet and exquisitely
bright,
Come back some memories of the past;
yes! I
Have known Heaven on this earth and
dwelt in light—
Even in the light of an immortal sky.

For love—love *is* immortal—and its glow
For ever o'er my very grave shall shine—
Yes! Love is Heaven—as I thank Heaven
I know;—
No wine of earth, *but*—a celestial wine!

Those early hours—when under starlit skies
 I drew in Love's first wondrous trem-
 bling breath—
 And dwelt—yes! dwelt in very paradise,
 And thought that earth could hold no
 woe but death!—

Ah! Life—what had'st thou been had I
 not heard

The songs of Love in early youth—nor
 felt

My heart by even her every whisper
 stirred,

Nor at her feet in hours of starlight
 knelt!

Oh! Love—thou wilt be ever with me
 here—

Thou and thy glorious memories—and I
 fear

Not for the future—even for evermore
 Thou wilt be mine — on the immortal
 shore!

A CERTAIN NIGHT IN DECEMBER.

AH! beautiful art thou — thou winter
 night!—

When on our sombre woods of heavy
 pines,

With something of the brilliant northern
 light,

Thy moon so calmly and serenely shines!

And underneath the stars the ocean sleeps,
 Her sullen waters motionless and grey—

And watch-lights glimmer from the rocky
 steeps,

As outbound vessels go forth on their
 way—

The frost is sparkling on each tiny flower—
 One hears no more the pine-wood's

heavy sigh—

Only the clock is tolling from the tower,
 And echoes clearly through the silent
 sky—

And still, at times, a bat flits softly by—
 Through its dark wings the moonlight

coldly shines—

The last faint murmurs from the village
 die,

And sombre night upon the earth
 reclines—

Even though thy stars look at a greater
 height—

And our world is as one unloved, un-
 blest,

Yet beautiful thou art — oh! winter
 night,

Though with this seeming spell upon thy
 rest!

HAUNTED GROUND.

EVEN as a vision we the past esteem—
 In which some figures stand out keen
 and bright—

And others, faint and unreal shadows
 seem—

Fading away into the sickly light.

Now, flitting in and out of strange, dark
 places,

Here in soft twilight, and there lost in
 gloom—

Withered, bent figures see we, and grim
 faces—

Things that are strange to wholesome-
 ness and bloom;

Yes! hardened cheeks are seen and lurid
 eyes—

As though but sin and shame had they
 beholden—

A brow that heavy seems with bitter
 lies—

And bloated lips, with very malice
 swollen—

Flowers die on every neighbouring spot of
 ground—

That until then had shown but blossoms
 fair,

Unwholesome vapours, full of shapes,
 abound—

No sweet or gracious scent is in the
 air—

Yet—is one fair form beautiful through
 all—

Lit up as by the planets from above—
 From which, and over which, no shadows

fall—

The form of Love—of pure, of faithful
 Love!

WHAT IT MEANS.

THERE is a peace felt in some hours of rest,
No word, from lip or pen hath e'er expressed,
Truly it is beyond all modes of speech,
And something one is taught, but cannot teach.

One thinks of many a noble life completed,
And resting, it may be, in one more fair—
And of the griefs that here to them were meted,
That in their passing, filled us with despair—

Then, looking up to see the myriad stars—
Each one its own world, though its voice is still,
One seems to wonder at the many jars
That our brief hour on earth appear to fill—

And yet each trivial, ever-fretting life
Again is one of myriads, nothing more—
A little puff of trouble, joy, or strife,
And it is—of the crowd that passed before.

God knows. I sometimes marvel what it means,
And what shall be of each new thing the end!
And why His work on earth for ever seems
Beyond our strongest wits to comprehend!

SO RUNS THIS LIFE AWAY!

So runs this life away!—the heavy cloud,
The many frightful tempests of this earth—
The brass-nailed coffin and the whitened shroud,
All—all attend us, from the hour of birth.

So runs this life away!—the smile of God
Yet quickens seed and fruit upon our boughs—
And hides with yellow corn the dull, brown sod,—
With juicy grass the plains where cattle browse—

So runs this life away!—the tender touch
Of lips that love—the shine of faithful eyes—
The noble deeds of those that suffer much
And yet are strong—and yet are true and wise—

So runs this life away!—the evil blight
On human hearts that beat with scorn and hate—
That look on all things human with hot spite—
While Death awaits them at his iron gate!

So runs this life away!—he doeth best
Who feareth little, though his heaven be grey—
Who, looking calmly for the hour of rest,
With "hope and charity" goes on his way!

LOST IN THE WOODS; OR, THE CRUEL COQUETTE, AND OTHER POEMS.

IN THE WATCHES OF THE NIGHT.

1885.

NIGHT MELODY.*

TRULY — thou nightingale — 'tis sweet to hear

Thy voice amid'st the shadows, soft and grey—

Thou bringest gentler thoughts and dreams more dear

Than those that seek us in the hours of day.†

Something—I know not what—but something seems

To speak to us in that strange song by night—

Something that even lies beyond our dreams,

Something—scarce melancholy,—yet not bright!

Thou sing'st thy strains in the still moonlit hours,

When thou and I alone may seem awake—

As one who singeth to the sleeping flowers,
And yet but sweetly on their rest shall break.

So, listening, shall one look up to the sky,
And see the moon across the calm heavens move,

Or watch the stars sink—with a gentle sigh,—

Thinking of some that grieve—of those I love—

Truly—thou nightingale—'tis sweet to hear
Thy voice amidst the shadows, soft and

grey—

Thou bringest gentler thoughts and dreams more dear

Than those that seek us in the hours of day.

LOST IN THE WOODS;

OR,

THE CRUEL COQUETTE.

IN weary silence two fair maidens sat,
One summer evening, by some aspen trees;

Under the shadow of each broad-brimmed hat

Stole gently, tenderly, the evening breeze—

Both seemed but sweet seventeen—and one was fair,

And blonde, with wealth of rippling, golden hair;

The other had the glow of the warm south,—

The low, broad brow, the sweet and pensive mouth—

Her long and sweeping lashes fell o'er eyes
Of depth and passion rare to northern skies,

* July 2nd, 1885.

† Not always. alas! See "Love! is not that the nightingale?" p. 164.

That gave you fear to glance into, as
though
A passion strong as Death lay veiled
below!

But she, the blonde — formed in more
common mould—
Had eyes of steely blue, and cruelly cold—
That warned you they could stab to death,
or worse,
Whose glance, beyond all words, might
darkly curse!

And neither looked contented — some
restraint
Appeared to rest between them—even a
faint
And troubled look, as of concealed dislike,
O'ershadowed the young face of each,
alike!

They had been speaking, ere the silence
fell,
In accents that were understood too well—
And that were barely veiled by a pretence
Of high-bred coldness, or indifference—

Aye! speaking of one Elwyn, of the heir
Of all those plains around and woodlands
fair;
One of an ancient, a time-honoured race,
For centuries the proud masters of that
place—

He was a bold, young fellow, full of light
And frankness, with a noble face and
bright—

A youth whom each fair girl long since
had known,
And in her secret soul had deemed—*her
own!*

And one the other's heart read but too
well,
By jealousy's mysterious, bitter spell—
And in that hateful scrutiny, mistook
Full many a thoughtless word and un-
checked look!

And Effie muttered—"She shall never take
His heart from me, although *her own
should break!*"

I know full well she hath a jealous turn
Of mind — ah! if that jealousy should
burn!—

"Burn to unquenchable and fiery glow!—
There is no hell so hateful, *well I know!*—
Burn so that, in a very storm of pride,
Her own mad hand shall thrust him from
her side!"

Unhappily, it seemed, young Elwyn wrote
To flirting Effie once, a thoughtless note
Of silly, careless trifling, with a store
Of youth's gay foolishness — *but nothing
more!*

Now there are those, we know, who have
averred
That *double meanings* lie in every word,
And, sometimes, even *something find*,
"intense
In subtlety"—in plainest common-sense!

So Effie, twisting, turning every phrase
Of Elwyn's note in divers subtle ways,
Spoke of him in that fond, possessive
tone,
We use, in speaking of our "very" own!

Alas! it was a hateful fraud, indeed,
A letter simply free and kind, to read
With meaning gesture and mock-modest
smile,
With many an accent, falsely warm the
while!

But all is fair in love and war, they say!—
Such tricks, forsooth, are tricks of every
day—
All play them, when by circumstances
pressed,
And why should one be better than the
rest!

Alas! there once belonged to Netta's life,
A tale of melancholy grief and strife,
A tale that none to her had dared unfold,
A dreary sorrow she was never told!—

She knew she was an orphan child, but
knew
Not a far darker story—known to few—
One only told, indeed, with "bated
breath,"
The fatal story of her father's death!

Long since he died upon a foreign land—
Long since he died by his own frantic
hand—

For some averred that, from a very child,
He had at times, seemed reckless, strange
and wild—

And she—the mother—in her girlish youth
Had married him, unknowing, then, the
truth :

Her friends had feared too little, hoped
too much—

And dared to "put her fortune to the
touch!"

Then, fearing lest like fate might be her
own,

This fatal brand to Netta was unknown—
This dread that like a thunder-cloud hung
o'er them

Or like a ghastly spectre marched before
them—

For all who saw her but too well could
trace

In Netta that unhappy's father's face—
So feared, and feared too truly—that she
might

Be doomed to suffer from that life's sad
blight.

Now it was said—alas! that this was true!
This dark, heart-breaking story Effie knew—
And jealousy, we know, is cruel indeed,
And cares but little how its victims bleed!

And Netta had, for reasons, pure and
sweet,

Although not such her lips could now
repeat,

In Elwyn's true and honest love believed—
Ah me! and could it be *he had deceived!*

And yet the death-like calmness of her
eyes,

Showed neither sorrow, anger, nor sur-
prise—

Only—she turned her dark, strained eyes
about,

And twisted her lithe fingers, in and out—

Then wearily she said—"The night is
cold—

The lambs must surely now be in the
fold

And every little bird is in its nest,
And even the wolf, perchance, hath gone
to rest"—

Yet spoke she in a halting, wandering
way,

As though her very wits had gone astray
Under some sudden blow, or bitter
blight—

And so they parted,—with a brief "Good-
night!"

Then, careless that still Netta stayed
behind,

Went Effie home, with light and thought-
less mind!—

Nor, to so base a heart as hers, was told,
The poor girl's very brain was numb and
cold.

"I am so lonely—" Netta softly said—
More late at night—"for all I loved lies
dead!

I hear not even one kind, one cheering
sound—

How dull and dreary is the world
around!—

"How dark the shadows of the ocean
seem—

How like the ghastly shadows of a
dream—

And yet so full of peace, so full of rest!
Oh! surely sleep like that must needs be
blest!

"Ah! let me now the deeper woodlands
seek,

That I may cool the fever of this cheek,
This fiery brow—that seems my soul to
burn—

O! . . . I will go . . . and . . . *I will
not return—*

"Until the purple shadows wrap the hill
And wood—until the earth is cold and
still—

Until the world is lost in heavy sleep—
And no one knows when weary eyes may
weep"—

And long they waited for her, but in
vain—

She came not back, ah! never home
again!—

And when the midnight's anxious hours
were passed

Young Elwyn's urgent help they prayed—
at last.

"Oh! my own darling!" wildly then he said—
 "Pray Heaven—great Heaven! I may not find her dead!
 What can have scared the poor girl thus and why
 Should she have wandered madly forth—to die!

"For never was there place more strangely wild
 Than those sea-woods of ours, or desolate—
 Where, not long since, was lost a timid child,
 One whom they only found again — *too late!*"

Dark, fateful words! and even as he spoke,
 Into the heavy, gloomy woods he went—
 And the sere pine-wood boughs before him broke,
 And the green saplings in his pathway bent—

No sound his strained and anxious hearing greets,
 The sombre shadows veil the midnight sky—
 Like gloomy palls—and even as winding-sheets
 The damp, thick mists upon the meadows lie—

Oh! never more in life shall he forget
 That awful moment, when he gently raised
Her rigid form—and saw, though living yet,
 Those eyes he loved were dim and almost glazed—

And yet she knew him, and the deadly pale
 Of her cold cheek changed slightly, as a wail
 Broke from her stiffened lips—a flickering smile,
 Piteous and sad, lighting her face the while—

"Dost thou so love me, then, yet I was told
 That Effie's love was all in all to thee—

And life seemed then so purposeless, so cold,
 For others might be joy, but not for me—

"Yes—that thy heart was Effie's—hers—alone—
 For me—there could be nothing but to die—
 So little seemed there here to call mine own—"
 And then she added—with a bitter sigh—

"That letter Effie showed me—ah! that note!
 So sweet, so tender!—" "Dear! I only wrote,"
 He said—"as might a foolish boy—no more,
 Nor *after* I had met *thee*—but *before!*

"O love—look up again—mine own dear love—
 Nay! cling to me, my darling—let me move
 And bear thee in these sheltering arms of mine,
 Into the warm glow of Love's own sunshine—"

"Sweet—kiss these faithful lips—"—but
 —with a sigh,—
 "It is too late—*too late!*" she moaned,—
 "but I
 Am happy, love, while thou art by my side—
 So happy—and—at peace!"
 And so—she died.

AFTERWARDS.

NOT until years had passed, once more they met,
 Nor shall false Effie e'er that hour forget!—
 For she, with more than shame, with terror, shook—
 As she confronted Elwyn's scornful look!

Nor did he ever marry—but alone
 He lived, till certain weary years had passed—
 Nor lightly had those dreary cycles gone,
 The fair sky of his youth was overcast—

And so his brow was lined, his hair was
grey
Before he died—and dying bade them lay
His body in a well-known grave—the same
That bore his Netta's forgotten name!

ALONE!

A MELANCHOLY RECORD.

THE hour was growing dark and late—
The city streets were desolate—
O'er monument, o'er column proud,
There hung a thick, unbroken cloud—
It was a tired and silent world—
The flags on every height were furled—
The chilly and autumnal air
Had stagnated, in street and square—
And if, to keenly listening ear,
The roll of carriage wheels seemed near,
It came with dull and muffled sound,
And soon had passed—and then again
Would beat, upon the stone-paved ground,
The steady splash of winter rain.

Yet there was one, with weary feet,
Still pacing the deserted street—
Who could not rest, though languid limb,
And eyes that looked both tired and dim,
Told many hours had flitted past
Since sleep had closed those eyelids last.
And sunken cheek and wasted frame—
The hectic flush that went and came
Upon his care-worn countenance,
The fever of his restless glance,
These spoke too clearly of the pain,
The labour that had been in vain!

His youth had scarcely passed away,
Yet life was hastening to decay—
Disease and poverty and scorn
His very heart-strings oft had torn;—
The energy of youth was chilled—
The spring of its high spirits stilled—
Worn down by want and stung by grief,
He grew indifferent to relief—
And with the dulness of despair,
He went—he knew not why, nor where—
And heard, through the deserted street,
The midnight's solemn chimes repeat—
Until—an hour or two more late,
He slowly passed a narrow gate,
And watched a ray of sickly light,

Come trembling out upon the night—
That seemed but fitfully to pass
Through unclean panes of "diamond"
glass.

But yet behold *one* brighter pane!
Ah . . . but that pane was broken! nor
However much his eyes might strain,
Much of that inner room he saw. . .

Until some hand retrimmed a lamp,
Then noted he the walls were damp,—
And saw there was no fire to warm
The shrivelled, ragged, wasted form
That bent above her labour still,
Beside, at best, this feeble light
With features that looked pinched and
chill—
With hair so prematurely white. . .

He turned away, half in despair,
And half in joy! *she* was not there!—
And if another, full as poor,
Not *she*!—who had been there before,
Long since,—he slowly turned away—
Unheeding whence his steps should stray;
Then paused to hear the merriment
That from a rich man's hall was sent
Upon the heavy air of night—
Halls that were full of warmth and light,—
And looked in through the iron gate,
Upon a building, full of state,
With noble entrance-arch of stone,
"Ah! would that this had been mine
own!"

For little dreamt his weary brain
That he who owned that proud domain,
Knew more, far more, of passion's strife,
More of the darker sides of life,
Than e'er had stained *his* vagrant youth!
'Twas strange, yet not the less a truth!—

Again, he—listless—turned away—
Unheeding whither he might stray;
At last his footsteps paused beside
A city churchyard—one not wide
As churchyard in the fields or plains,—
For but a narrow strip contains
The bones of those that die, within
A large area of want and sin!—
And there was placed one simple stone—
The name it bore was like his own—
'Twas there *she* rested then!—but he?
"Ah, dear one! *there is room for me!*"

One dwelling near—some hours more
late,
Looked in, in passing by the gate—
"So! one more added to the dead!
Only an unknown tramp!" he said.

DROPPED OUT OF THE WORLD.

ONE on the early paths of Life was seen,
With youth's proud footsteps—with ambi-
tion keen—
With eager outlook and undaunted brow—
Yet tell me!—Where is that gay hero
now?
Ah! question not! far better let him
rest—
Forgotten by the world—unnamed—
unblest!—

High hopes upon his future had been
built;
Have they been dimmed by sorrow, or by
guilt?
Oh! hath he tarnished, then, a glorious
name,
And stumbled on the lofty road to fame?
Ah! question not! far better let him
rest—
Forgotten by the world—unnamed—
unblest!—

They said he was the child of many fears,
And many hopes—the heir of noble years—
They said his star would shine through
future ages—
His deeds emblazon History's noblest
pages—
Yet!—question not! far better let
him rest—
Forgotten by the world—unnamed—
unblest!—

We pass this life in visions—idle dreams!
Nor fame shall prove the easy prize she
seems—
The paths are steep that lead to higher
realms—
And fear affrights—the tempest over-
whelms—
So question not! far better let him
rest—
Forgotten by the world—unnamed—
unblest!

Yes! let him go where wars and tumults
cease—
And if remembered not, at least in peace!
Ah!—let the mosses o'er his tombstone
grow—
He sleeps at last, unmoved, who sleeps
below—
So question not, O stranger—let him
rest—
Forgotten by the world—unnamed—
unblest!

TIME'S CHANGES.

THEY had been lovers in the by-gone
years—
Exchanging smiles—weeping each other's
tears—
Had, hand in hand, walked o'er bright
plains of flowers,
And sworn their fondest love in summer
bowers—

They had been lovers—yes! in days of old—
Ere yet the stars paled and the skies grew
cold—
Ere distrust tore their fast-locked hands
apart—
Dividing soul from soul, and heart from
heart—

They had been friends in days that are no
more—
As honest as have others been before!
Nor yet believing that their bonds could
sever—
That heart might not be true to heart for
ever—

The oaths they swore are all forgotten now—
New lines and strange are written on each
brow,
And eyes are dim with that unspoken
woe—
That blight, that such upon this earth
shall know.

Alas! but time can bring unlooked-for
changes—
The cold and hard experience that
estranges
The tale of slander—the far-echoed lies—
The falsehoods that can light unfaithful
eyes!—

PARTED—FOR EVER.

"AYE! fare thee well! the hour hath come
when thou
And I must part—the chains that long
I wore
Are broken, and I see, uncrowned, thy
brow!—
I know thee well—at last—thy day is
o'er—

"So—*fare thee well*—yes! still these words
I write,
Despite of knowing—what, alas! thou
art—
I cannot wish thee ill—although I might
Feel bitter scorn for thee, as thus we
part!

"Oh! still remembrance of *one* fair time
must
Rest in my heart, nor ever pass away—
Even as a rose springs from the foulest
dust,
And sweetens what is yet but sad decay—

"Therefore, still fare thee well; and as I
sever
All links that bound us in the days of
yore,
I pray that we are parted now for ever,—
Thy once dear memory brightens life no
more!

"Alas! I cannot hate where once I loved—
Thy very voice is as an evil spell—
So shall I never hear its tones unmoved.
Oh! dream of evil days—once more—
farewell!"

ALONE—AND LOST!

"UNDER the stars," they say, she often
stands,
Lifting her pallid face to the still sky,
Clasping her white, her wasted, withered
hands,
Yet weeping not—nor uttering moan nor
sigh.

Ah!—what hath been in that past life of
hers

To leave a mark so terrible behind?
That weight of stern despair, that nothing
stirs

Or moves—that ghastly shadow on her
mind?

In that loud world around her closed, there
may

Be none who know the truth of that dark
tale

Once heard narrated, in an earlier day;
Aye! none who *now* may o'er it weep
and wail—

Alas! unhappy soul—and time shall pass,
Day after day, making up dreary years,
Her life but as a mirror of *stained* glass,
In which but her own hopeless face
appears—

And still she gives no sign—she speaks no
word

Herself, of that strange, melancholy
past—

Nothing from her thin, pallid lips is
heard—

So shall it be, they say, unto the last—

Aye! so—on to the end—and who shall
lay

The roses on so sad and lone a tomb!

Who for that blighted life shall ever pray,
As she in silence meets her unknown
doom!

NO HAUGHTY MONUMENT HAST
THOU.

(Date, about 1845.)

No haughty monument hast thou—
No marble pillar here shall raise
Its cold head o'er thy colder brow—
No tablet writ with human praise—
And yet thou hast as calm a sleep,
Thy slumber is as still and deep
Beneath the shadow of the tree,
As rest in marble vaults might be!
And when the sky is looking down
Upon thy grave without a frown,

As beautifully, calmly bright,
As it gleams over thee to-night, *
Oh! I could sometimes almost weep
To share that lone, unbroken sleep!

Time passes with unequal pace—
A long, unmeasured time it seems
Since last I gazed upon that face,
I only now shall see in dreams—
And sat and watched thy fading cheek,
And heard thy voice so feebly speak
And thank me for those "last sweet
flowers!"**

And said they spoke of brighter hours—
How well is this remembered now!
How often in the silent night,
Have I thought of thy gentle brow,
Thine eyes, once soft with heavenly
light,
And longed—till longing grew such pain
I knew not how to bear its strain—
To see thee as thou wert before—
If *once*—I dared not ask for more.

Ah, God! it is a weary thing
To watch the fading of the spring,
The summer passing brightly by,
The paling of the autumn's sky,
And know that this must never be!—
The heart that long had counselled me
By tales the lips so wisely told,
That heart for ever now is cold!—
Yet wrong it were to grieve, since
Thou
Hast sent the life-blood from that
brow,
And on that tried heart set its seal,
Before mine own had time to feel
How much of knowledge and of thought,
It owed to what those lips had taught.

Sleep on—sleep on—and still shall be
Old days — old memories linked with
thee—
Still echo—even from the dead,
The lessons that thy lips have said—
They blossom from the very sod!—
And when the days of earth are
o'er,
Then—brother,* with the will of God,
I look on thy true face once more.

MUTABILITY.

A LAMENT AND A REBUKE.

BY TWO SPEAKERS.

FIRST SPEAKER.

"OUR lives are but as gossamers—frail
threads
In sunshine spun, and full of light and
graces,—
One moment!—and the storm breaks o'er
our heads,
Ere yet the smile hath faded from our
faces!—

"And when the long and dreary days are
passed,
That glance of pale regret, unconquered
pain,
That backwards on those fleded hours we
cast,
Is all our powers can bear and not o'er-
strain!

"Full little know we what despair and
crime
In other scenes or cycles shall be
wrought;
O fool! if thou would'st seek to hasten
time
Thy thoughts are madness—thy poor
brain distraught.

"Our lives are but as gossamers—frail
threads
In sunshine spun and full of light and
graces—
One moment!—and the storm breaks o'er
our heads,
Ere yet the smile hath faded from our
faces."—

SECOND SPEAKER.

"Nay! look not back, nor strain thy gaze
before—
Nor pray for youth's bright hopes again
to glow—

* The Poetess's eldest brother, who died when she was a girl. See p. 7.

Love's warm, impetuous dreams return no more—

There is no retrogression—here below.—

“Yet—weak of vision! are thine eyes so dark

That thou can'st see not morning follows night!

That thou can'st not discern the brilliant spark

Gilding the world with an eternal light!”

FIRST SPEAKER.

“Nay! but our lives are gossamers—frail threads

In sunshine spun, and full of light and graces—

One moment! and the storm breaks o'er our heads,

Ere yet the smile hath faded from our faces—

“Or call our days but meteors—full of wonder,

That gladden earth by only passing rays—

And joy is as the flash preceding thunder,

That vanishes in darkness as we gaze!

“Flowers bloom to fade before our weeping eyes,

And beauty hides her sweetness in our graves—

The infant, smiling in our faces, dies—

Lost as the snow-flake—falling on the waves—

“Oh! life is long, and life is full of woe—

Its morn is one of storms—its eve of gloom—

Its setting sun sends back no after-glow—

Its sad stars set into an ocean tomb—”

SECOND SPEAKER.

“Yet flowers that wither may uprise again—

The rose re-open, full as richly hued—

And stars once more may brighten ere they wane—

And hopes upspring, and joy may be renewed—

“Pale mourner, pause—be ever wise—and wait—

Thou know'st not yet what glories may be thine—

Thou may'st not be for ever desolate,

But win, at last, a peace—a joy divine!”

THE MYSTERIOUS KNELL.*

A MEMORY.

THE midnight chimes rang out upon the air,

Those ancient chimes the village knew so well,

Then, like a voice of death and of despair,
Came the strange tolling of the funeral bell!

Out on the awe-struck air it slowly rang,
So solemnly that it might well appal—
Not with a careless, or discordant twang,
But with a gentle swell—a gentler fall.

Mysteriously it came—as strangely died—
A voice to fill with sorrow, or with fear,
Yet reached its message neither far, nor wide,
Nor fell on any distant, listening ear.

And sometimes still I hear those echoing notes,

Yes! echoing through the long years
that are gone—

* Many years ago, now, the tolling of the deepest bell in the peal of the old village church o. — was heard at midnight, by several in the neighbourhood, as well as by ourselves—who can still well remember the awestruck feelings such a sound at such an unusual hour created. Although many inquiries were made it was never discovered who rang the knell, nor for whom it was tolled. The people of the village and neighbourhood generally were very superstitious, and it seems hardly credible that any one of them would have dared to secrete himself in the old village church at night for the purpose of playing such a silly trick.

And each, as through the heavy mist it floats,
Hath something weird and ghastly in its tone.

None ever knew for whom, or why it tolled,
Or if it were for some forgotten dead—
Whose memory to the living now was cold,
Whose very bones had crumbled in their bed.

"HELL-CROFT." *

THEY gave thee a strange name, old field of ours—

In days long past—where the pale planets shine
Sweetly and calmly on thy fair field-flowers,
Where nothing grows more weird than eglantine!

Field larks and snipes and plovers may be seen

In season, in thy stubble, or thy grass,
And violets of the bluest, stud the green,
And sunlight shadows broadly o'er thee pass—

And pimpernel and other old-world weeds,
Thy furrowed lands and way-side clods adorn—

The garish poppy sows its many seeds,
And cornflowers star with blue the golden corn.

One hears the call of partridge and corn-crake

As shades of evening o'er thee slowly creep—

And hares steal forth from the low hedge of brake,

As evening shadows grow more soft and deep.

Of its strange history little we remember,
To make one shudder at its ghastly name!

"Haunted" by sportsmen only, in September,
"Not much romance," O Hell-Croft, can'st thou claim!

THE OLD FIG-TREE IN THE SQUARE.†

THAT ancient fig, beloved in olden times,
Still o'er the grey-stone wall contented climbs—

And throws its lengthening shadow o'er the grass,

As the slow hours of summer evenings pass.

The calm—the perfect hush of every sound,
The want of passion in the world around,
Makes this strange square within the City's heart,

Scarce of the world around a living part—

That sacred past o'er which our poets yearned,

One might have fancied, in this spot, returned!

One almost looked to see the stately pace
Of monks, or nuns around the cloistered place!

Yet—could these shadows of the past come back

Once more to tread that worn, secluded track—

To look around them with their old-world eyes,

There *might* be — less of pleasure than surprise!

They might proclaim that many a modern plan

And many a new idea of modern man,
Not in all things a profit and a gain—

That half our boasts of progress are but vain!

Yes!—they might even be shocked at many crimes

And phantasies, of these—our later times,

* The name of a field in H—shire. Attracted by its name the poet, Sydney Dobell, wrote a legend about it when he was a boy of 17.

† On one side of an ancient square in old London, grew a fig-tree, reported to be of almost the age of its surroundings.

And sigh to have the joys possessed
before,
To have the slandered past return once
more!

A GIANT OF MEMORIES!

OR

THE GREAT CEDAR.*

OH! tree mysterious — would we could
divine,
Through the proud silence of thy noble
years,
The myriad secrets that must needs be
thine,
Though never yet revealed to mortal
ears!

Thou art a giant born, of trees of earth,
Thou can'st not by the rudest storm be
shocked—
The voice of song, the sound of ringing
mirth
But mock thee, as thou death itself hast
mocked!

What secrets of past centuries have been
thine,
Locked in thy mighty trunk! — what
solemn vows
May'st thou have registered!—what forms
divine
May once have rested underneath thy
boughs!

Thou hast seen worlds that now would
seem as strange
As stars that come to us as daylight
waned—
Thou hast seen phantasies and things of
change,
Thou hast seen meteors passing o'er the
plains—

The daughters—not of fair Judea, and yet
Untutored, may beneath thy boughs have
danced,
While the deep purple of the slow sunset—
As one who sorrowed—through thy
branches glanced.

No! thou wilt keep thy secrets and art
sad,
As one by grief informed—majestic tree!
As though thy soul said—"If the world
be clad
In sackcloth, it is nothing new to
me!"—

Our fathers—yea! and our forefathers—all
Surrounding thee, have lived their little
day,
That seems to each so much,—and empires
fall,
And stars are lost and cycles pass away—

And—as in mockery of thy noble state—
The sparrow in thy verdure builds its
nest,†
The little have no knowledge of the great,
Yet—all may, in the march of things, be
best!

Thy age no lessons to our children teach—
As, season after season, spring returns,
And summer — autumn — each succeeding
each,
For nothing of the dead the living learns.

Ah! had'st thou but the gift of human
speech
What eirie legends of the past were
thine!
But silently thy stately branches reach
Across the ages—nor vouchsafe a sign!

What fairy gossip might thy dark leaves
tell
In the sweet hours when earth and sky
are grey!
Of dynasties that rose — of thrones that
fell,
Of great men born—of great men passed
away!

As summer dew-drops in her pale beams
glisten,
'Tis fair to see the moon so calmly
shine
On thy grand stem, and almost seem to
listen
To catch some solemn utterance of
thine!

* A remarkably grand tree, of unknown age, standing in the beautiful grounds of —, Esq.

† The untidy litter of the nests of the tree-sparrow hung from many of the stately boughs.

And stars shine into thy great depth of
boughs—

As though to read the secret of their
gloom—

But less receptacle for lovers' vows

Art thou, than for the voices of the
tomb!

Yea! would thou had'st a tongue!—how
wild a tale

Might'st thou not pour into our listening
ears—

Such as might make the calmest brow turn
pale,

And move the hardest heart to sighs
and tears!

Thou may'st have witnessed many hideous
crimes,

The dark career of many an evil life—
Scenes we can picture not in our changed
times,

Wars—civil wars—disease, foul deaths
and strife.

What lessons to the future thou could'st
teach!

What records of our past time thou hast
known!—

Who, through the centuries of thy life
shall reach,

To gather the wild fruits that are thine
own!

Keep them, O Sphinx!—for it is not for
us

To break upon thy mystical repose—

Nor could we, in our shortened hours,
discuss

The potent secrets that thou might'st
disclose—.

Thou art of Cyclops—we of pigmy birth—
Neither thy strength nor years for us are
meet—

Thou standest as a victor on the earth—
With man—the conquered—sleeping at
thy feet!

WITHERED FLOWERS.

ALAS! fair flowers, so prized long years
ago!—

Where are thy leaves of bloom, or purest
snow?

Is this sad bud, bedewed with sorrow's
tears,

The once bright blossom of departed
years?

Is this the pink wheat-bine—in fields of
corn

Gathered—with long-passed joy—in dewy
morn?

Is this the sweet wood-lily, once so
white,

Found in calm Odsey-groves, by pale
starlight!

Ah me! "forget-me-nots!" once tender-
hued!

What tears your pale, blue petals have
bedewed!

Discovered — stolen by the pale moon-
beams,

When wandering once, by Withington's
clear streams.

Then thou wert treasured as love's earliest
prize—

In secret watched, with fond and jealous
eyes;

Recalling still, though years have passed
away,

That time of love and prayer, at twilight
grey.

But oh! how many tears of anguish fell

Upon thy tiny leaves—red Pimpernel!

And ah! — how many nights upon my
breast,

Hath slept that honeysuckle — now so
pressed!

Nay! even that scarlet poppy, I remember
We found in Kelshall cornfields—in Sep-
tember—

And this! for this we had full many a
search,

Ere it was found near Bygrave's ivied
church!

Ah! loved and long-passed years—ye are
as dead

As these pale, withered blooms, on which
I shed

Such bitter tears for joys that are no
more;

Return to thy dark tomb—thy days are
o'er!

We may not wisely, on our onward
ways,
Wake the sad voices of departed days—
We do but shiver with their mournful
thrill—
Go back ye — to your resting-place — be
still!

Disturb no more, ye years, my weary
brain,
Each thought of ye brings less of joy than
pain—
Days come and go and Fate is cold and
stern;
The hours of joy—once passed—no more
return!

I LIVE THEM O'ER AGAIN—!

SWEETEST! my thoughts, in the still
evening hours,

Go back to some fair dreams of long
ago—
To walks through winding lanes of summer
flowers,
And secret woods that only lovers
know—

Sweetest! how much of these dear hours
remain—

Full fragrant to the memory and how
fair!

One feels it sometimes as a bitter strain
To bring the thoughts back from the
days that were!

I live them o'er again—oh! mine own
love—

They are not distant past recall—even
now—

The stars still shine as then they shone
above,

And light the later calmness of thy
brow!

Still do I feel the glory that is here

To those that love—to whom is love but
true—

The tender smile, the yet more tender
tear—

The song that though so old, is ever
new!

Ah!—it is sweet that memory yet shall hold
Of treasures in herself a glorious store,
That love shall never withered be and
old—

That those who love shall love for ever-
more!

MUSING.—XV.

LIFE teaches many lessons, pure and
sweet—

Loved sounds pass softly through the
evening air!—

The tender echoes of beloved feet,
The voice of ever faithful love is there.

Time proves the steadfast!—even as it
shows

The feeble, fickle hearts by some pos-
sessed—

The reckless falsehoods of unworthy foes,
The envy that consumes the jealous
breast.

So shall it show that fruit, though seeming
sound,

May have a rotting speck, deep in its
core—

The withered peaches—falling to the
ground—

So cheering eyes, that loved their bloom,
no more—

Yet point out what is fair—what still
remains,

Regardless of the *grip* of early frost—

Though winds may shrilly howl upon the
plains—

And in the withered grass our flowers
be lost—

Late roses lift their heads, with fragrant
scent—

Still greet us brightly both at morn and
eve—

Rich sunlight still to forest depths is lent,
And much remains to bless—not all to
grieve!

MANY LESSONS—TAUGHT AND UNTAUGHT!

YES—Life! full many lessons hast thou
taught—

But also more *un*-taught, upon thy ways—

With what a heavy price have some been
bought—
What light smiled on some of thy
happier days!

Here hast thou proffered roses—rich with
scent—
And passion-flowers of deepest, warmest
hue—
Here lilies of the purest hast thou lent,—
Here fragrant violets of the deepest
blue—

Yes! thou hast given us of the fruits most
fair,
That if they fall, fall *ripened* on the
ground—
Here shall be heard upon the evening
air,
Voices of tuneful and of tender sound.—

Now bringest thou the tempest to the land,
From the broad surface of a troubled
ocean—

Now art thou darkly furious, if grand,
And full of wild, of passionate emotion—

Now dost thou bring an evil, bitter blight
Upon all things of promise, or of
bloom—

The heavy shade of an unwholesome
night—
The breath of slander on a holy tomb.

MANY VIEWS!

AYE, Life! thou art a pilgrimage of grief
To some that yet are bound to here pur-
sue thee—
To others thou art brilliant—if so brief;—
'Tis hard to think in what light we
should view thee!

Yes! some perceive but here thy darker
side—

Only the turgid streams that through
thee flow,
And out of angry scorn, or wounded pride,
Will call thee nothing but a hell below!

And others view thee as a stage for folly,
And cry, as many have before them
cried,

"Away, away! with foolish melancholy,
The world is merry and its stage is
wide!"

Love often looks at it with eyes of
tears,

And only for the coming evening prays—
Her steps are often paralysed by fears—
She hears the dead leaves falling through
her days—

Its air to some seems hot—to others cool—
If sternly real, it is a stage no less—

Where all must reason learn—except the
fool,
And where some live to curse and some
to bless!

AGAIN—LESSONS OF EARTHLY TEACHING.

ONE tree, of blighted orchards, yet will
bear

Fruit that is bountiful, and fresh and fair—
And amidst surrounding withered ones,
shall stand

A glory—while but cumber, they, the land!

Amidst a very crowd of the unwise
One that is noble stands beneath the
skies—

Mid'st much that is but of plebeian grain,
Shines the refinement of a lofty brain—

A worn-out plant may bear one noble
bloom,

The rest shall share degeneration's doom—
One star shall shine, a glorious light above,
The rest, as satellites around her move.

Out of a herd of motley ones, will spring
A noble stag—a high-bred, stately thing—
Whose pace is quite unlike the common
herd,

Whose breast is by a finer instinct stirred.

Truly, must nature work in her own
ways,—

She sees beyond—into the coming days—
She meditates division of her stores,
Nor new wine into old, cracked vessels
pours!

A FEEBLE PLANT!

SOME call thee but a feeble plant, O
Love!—

Whose roses easily their petals shed—
Or they will use thee as a dainty glove,
One quickly soiled and cast aside, 'tis
said!—

Thou can'st not thrive on *any* untilled
soil—

A truth, O Love! that some seem slow
to know—

And there are those but uselessly shall toil,
To make thy buds in the fair sunlight
blow—

But flint and rock lie under some smooth
lands,

Nor is the atmosphere, around, too
sweet!

And they may toil and toil, with patient
hands,

Yet see thy flowers, O Love! die at their
feet.

Still—slowly, men receive the truth, that
thou

Can'st blossom not on *every* soil of ours,
The flowers with which they fain would
crown their brow,

Grow not in *any* chill, untended
bowers!—

So shall it be—the shelter of green woods,
The cooling clouds that o'er hot moun-
tains race—

The rainfall and the sometimes rushing
floods,

Each doeth good in its own time and
place.

MANY VOICES OF MEMORY.—I.

(THE FADED NOSEGAY.)

UNDER the sod full many shapes are
sleeping;—

Arouse them not—let them in silence lie!
Memory too often o'er her past sits weep-
ing,

O'er troubles buried, yet that will not
die.

A certain sweetness in the air still lingers,
Above the spot wherein they lie at rest,
That hour when with reluctant, trembling
fingers,

We took those blossoms sadly from our
breast.—

Oblivion truly were most wise;—hot tears
Have blighted all the freshness of each
leaf—

Ah! let them rest with our departed
years,—

Revive thou not thy rapture—nor thy
grief.

Love shall rekindle not departed fires,—
Life lingers not upon her homeward
way,—

And thou may'st see, as thy sad footstep
tires,

The fading colours of departing day.

MANY VOICES OF MEMORY.—II.

YES! they who speak but of thy joys can
know

But little of what else thy hand can deal!
O memory!—thou can'st strike so cruel a
blow

The very brain beneath it seems to reel—

If some sweet hours thy presence may re-
call,

Past glories of some loftier, happier
state,

Thou also dost unfold the funeral pall,
That hides the broken heart beneath its
weight—

'Tis true thou can'st bring back sweet
music's strain,

The far sound of the shepherd's pipe, at
night,

But, also, dost thou, from the battle plain,
Bring the strong cry of pain, or of
affright!

Thou, also, dost bring back the sufferer's
moan,

Disturbing the deep calm of midnight
hours,

The dying autumn's melancholy tone,
Lamenting o'er her broken, withered
flowers—

Thou, also, dost recall the lover's sigh,
Breathing the last and bitterest fare-
well—
The thrill of joys that seem to come to
die—
Lastly—the sad sound of the funeral
bell.

MANY VOICES OF MEMORY.—III.

Yet—though thou bringest thoughts o'er
which we weep,
O Memory! when thy varied dreams re-
turn,
It were not well thou should'st for ever
sleep,
Thy thoughts are not *all* thoughts that
sting, or burn!

Truly — with offerings purest and most
sweet,
Thou sometimes even dost stab us to
the heart,
And—though one hand be with sweet
flowers replete,
The other holds a cruel, a poisoned
dart—

With Heaven it rests, to send our
chequered dreams,
They answer rarely to our own wild
call—
Sometimes in storms—sometimes with
sunny gleams,
At God's command they come — as
shadows fall.

Yes! eyes we loved come back to us, and
still
Look into ours, with constancy un-
shaken—
Deep tones of tenderness awake a thrill
No living tones on earth can more
awaken—

Ah! therefore would men have them come,
once more,
To stand beside them—with their gentle
gaze—
Bring back the joys that now have gone
before,
The sweetness of Love's bright and early
days!*

A LIFE FOR HEAVEN.

OFTEN a noble life hath been laid down
On earth, and no one knows where it
shall sleep—
They place on that man's tomb no gilded
crown—
And there are few that pass, and none
that weep—

That left hand knew not what that right
hand did—
He boasted not—even to his dearest
friends!
Nor did he go amongst his kind—and chid,
Because they followed not *his* ways and
ends;—

He walked not proudly amongst other
men—
Nor looked he for reward with any care—
Nor prayed he for the help of any pen
To spread abroad his titles on the air!

That soul was brave in secret—and the God
Who sees in secret surely shall reward—
Simple, yet strong, the pathways that he
trod,
That no coarse trumpet sought to blare
abroad.

He valued not the plaudits of a crowd—
Nor cared that any prize to him might
fall—
Neither of any talent was he proud—
A peaceful conscience—that to him was
all!

IN EARLY LIFE WE DREAM.

In early life we dream our skies are blue—
Our outlook seems a sweet and varied
view—
We fear not hearts can ever chill or
change,
Or lips grow harsh and bitter thoughts
estrangle—

We look with faith into unfaithful eyes—
The counsels of the fool accept as wise—
We listen to the oily lips that speak
The vows of friendship, with unblushing
cheek.

* See p. 20—"Dreams."

We fear not "friends" may stain our path
with lies,
Look on us but with envy's darkened
eyes—

Wish us but evil—breathe upon our name
Their own cold, bitter breath of hate and
shame!—

Even those who "postured" as "above
the rest—

That common herd!"—within whose pious
breast

Shall never harbour meanness, falsehood—
spite—

Or anything that was not true and bright.

Ah! but these things of Earth's—these
creeping things!—

These poor experiences of *lower* things,
Should darken not too often, the fair sky,
At least, of happier *youth's*—Philosophy!

HER THOUGHTS GO BACK.

HER thoughts go back to many a lone
grave,

Where far away — apart — her kindred
lie—

The old—the young—the strong—the weak
—the brave—

Some near—and some beneath a new-
world sky—

Yet are they scarce more parted—these—
the dead

Of many varied households of past days,
Than are some living—those whose foot-
steps led

Into such broken—such divided ways—

Nay—more; the dead to us seem linked,
by far

More closely than some living; those
whose souls

Are separate, through some internal jar,
Or those whose steps are bent to other
goals.

Can there be aught in life *more* wide apart
Than are some scenes through which our
brethren move?—

Yes!—more divided still shall be the heart
That loves not, and the heart that lives
to love!

For truly—they are even in the race
Of life as different plants—so they ap-
pear!—

And in the one our eyes can see no trace
Of that which beautifies the other here!

LILAC BUSHES.

A PLEASANT MEMORY.*

AH, lilac bushes! we remember still—
As though it were a joy of yesterday—
How, where the boughs bent, at their own
sweet will,

We sat of old, and watched the birds at
play—

And there the robin often chose a place
To build, in early spring, its well-lined
nest—

And even the hedge sparrow, of hardier
race,

Loved the calm shelter of that spot of
rest—

There would we sit to read old-world
romances—

The tales of sorrow and of maidens'
tears,

Of fierce encounters and of warriors'
lances—

Listening to birds' glad twittering in our
ears—

Oh! "days of old lang-syne"—oh! peace-
ful bowers!

That knew, alone, of many a brilliant
dream—

Blue skies of summer — softly passing
hours,

How like a glimpse of other worlds ye
seem!

And yet the simple memories of those
leaves,

And scents and blossoms shall not pass
away!—

* It was a certain little clump of large old lilac bushes, in the midst of which a seat was made—a favourite haunt of robins, wrens, and finches—in the large garden belonging to the old Manor House, Sandon, Bury—into which we brought Scott's, Jane Porter's, or Miss Edgeworth's novels—for leisure reading.

And in a busier life the heart still grieves
O'er these fair visions of a long-passed
day!

THE ROSES OF AN OLD
HERTFORDSHIRE GARDEN.*

THERE was the "Rose-Celestial"—*born in*
China!

And with a *heavenly* fragrance, sweet
to know—

The *yellow* rose, but fitted for a *Dinah*
The *rose de mot*—a lovely little *mot*:

Oh! but the *common* China rose as well—
The one renowned for many a climbing
feat—

Not, as one thinks, of the *most* favoured
smell—

But still — *being* a rose *born* — passing
sweet!

Then the striped York-and-Lancaster—the
rose

That once restored peace to a land of
trouble,

The rose that stayed full many reckless
blows—

And one that—yes! of course it was—
quite double!

The fragrant *cabbage*—large and pink and
round—

Growing with little care, and the delight
Of many a cottager's small patch of
ground,

And one that rarely suffered from the
blight!

The velvet, black-red Tuscany—ah! now
These "old-world roses" yield to newer
kinds—

More fit for the *irreverent* modern brow,
More suited to the *democratic* minds!!

Ah! but these modern roses cannot beat
The dear old roses of the stately
heads!—

No! they can never be so rich and sweet
As the fair roses of our *ancient* beds!

THE OLD CHURCH IN
THE SQUARE.†

How far away seems now that time when
we

Sat on some tomb beneath its shadowy
tree,

Yet mused on little, save the flowers that
grew

With such sick colours under the dark yew!

How far away seems now that time, when
none

But mists of sky obscured the cheerful
sun,

That shone so brightly on the daisy's
head,

Growing in meekness o'er the silent
dead!

Nor thought we even of the forms that
slept

Below—by whom once loved, by whom
once wept—

If claimed by happy youth, or feeble age,
Or those that scarce had turned life's
earliest page.

There may have rested some worn, weary
heart,

Some—whose sad prayers had long been
to depart—

And leave a world of toil and overstrain,
For that new life where is nor death, nor
pain.

How calm, how dull! yet in the city's
heart!

A span, enclosed within the world's great
mart—

The hum of its vast peoples scarcely stirred
The silence—almost as a whisper heard!

Or, now and then, the great clock of the
tower

Rang out the changes of each summer
hour,

Then warned our restful feet to leave the
dead,

The toiling paths of life once more to
tread.

* The county of Hertfordshire has been often termed—the rose garden of England!

† M—Square, London.

AH, COME! DREAMS OF THE SUMMER'S STILLY NIGHT.

AH, come!—dreams of the summer's stilly
night—
By memory brought us—dreams of sweet
delight—
Once more, beneath the moonlight's tender
beams
I wander, lost in Love's own wondrous
dreams.

I see the fairies, as in days of old—
The woods—the open fields—the warm
sheep-fold—
I drink the dew that sparkles on the
flowers—
I hear the owl hoot—in the pine-wood
bowers—

I watch the sun rise in the Eastern sky,
I listen for the curlew's early cry,
I wander through the cornfields, brown
and wide—
I gather roses in the sweet hedge-side—

I watch the swallows' broken, fitful flight—
Departing, one by one, with summer's
light—
I hear the sparrows chattering in the
eaves—
The slow, sad rustle of the falling leaves—

Ah, yes! ye come again and yet again—
Ye dreams of mixed delight and tender
pain—
And flitting, leave behind a scent — a
glow—
Of withered leaves—of flowers of long ago.

A PLANT OF DAISIES,

GROWING OUT OF A CREVICE IN A
STONE WALL BY A BLEAK COUNTRY
ROAD.

So shall a good deed blossom and bring
grace
To many a seeming hard and barren
place—

Thou little flower—so far from all thy kind!
Left unprotected from the parching wind,
Or from the fiercer tempests rushing by—
Fair yet thou seemest—smiling to the sky.

So shall a good deed blossom and bring
grace
To many a seeming hard and barren
place—

By thy pure beauty dost thou make more
sweet
This bitter path, trod oft by weary feet—
Untended hast thou been by friendly hand—
And growing but by love, and not com-
mand—

So shall a good deed blossom and bring
grace
To many a seeming hard and barren
place—

The traveller's eye shall note thee with
delight—
The one fair blossom in a spot of blight—
The artist's hand that paints that wall
shall not
Find any tint so sweet upon the spot—

So shall a good deed blossom and bring
grace
To many a seeming hard and barren
place—

Thou art a resting-place for travelled bee—
The wandering ant may shelter find by
thee—
The sun upon thy leaves shall rest awhile—
The moonlight touches thee with tender
smile—

So shall a good deed blossom and bring
grace
To many a seeming hard and barren
place!

A CERTAIN DAY IN JULY; OR, BY THE STREAM WITH AN ANGLER.

It was a day to make a poet dream!—
The heavy grass waved o'er a sparkling
stream,

That murmured softly as it went along—
And through the air came as a gentle
song.

There was an Angler, where the stream ran
wide—
And where the reeds less densely veiled
the side!—
Fair was the picture that an artist drew—
While swallows o'er the fragrant meadow
flew.

The song of the reed-warbler—clear and
sweet,
Was heard upon the river's fragrant
bank—
Where tall heads of bulrushes thickly
meet,
Where purple loosestrife groweth, tall
and rank—

The massive clouds moved slowly o'er the
sky,
Deep, low-voiced thunder echoed on the
ear—
The sea-gull inland flew,* with plaintive
cry,
As though forewarning some wild storm
was near.

The cattle grouped beneath the meadow
trees,
The wind came through the boughs, as
with a sigh—
The bent grass rose to meet the moaning
breeze,
That swept so gustily across the sky—

The gad-flies flitting brightly through the
air—
The blackbird's loud soliloquising
song—
And often the forked lightning's sudden
glare,
Impressions made, to be remembered
long!

I KNEW NOT —.

I KNEW not life could yield such joy as I
Have felt upon this earth in some fair
days—

When I have seemed to look into a sky
Almost too beautiful for earthly gaze.

So that the soul awhile seemed lifted far
Above the common troubles piled
around,
Above the trumpet note of modern war,
That drowns each sweeter and more
tender sound.

Yet as the light was brilliant, pure and
sweet,
So also were some shadows full of
wrath—
Yet if gay flowers grew round the onward
feet
So also rough flint stones bestrewed the
path.

Faith—that is worthy—shall but smile at
death—
Love whispers joy even with her dying
breath—
Nor—though the clouds lie often on the
scene—
Shall I forget the glad days that have
been.

Yet would I rather know the mountain-top,
Or the weird darkness of the noble deep,
Where meteors cleave the air, or storm-
clouds drop,
Than ever to one deadly level keep!

A CRY OF DISCONTENT.

(AH! THERE ARE MOMENTS.)

AH! there are moments when the heart is
sick,
And when our dragging limbs cry out
for rest,
And when the mists around seem growing
thick,
And when our very breathing seems
oppressed.

And when too often tears bedew the eyes,
And love itself gives but a troubled kiss,
And we but dimly see the distant skies—
The rays that soon the darkness shall
dismiss—

* They sometimes do this when a storm is brewing.

Yes! moments that o'erpower us sadly—
 when
 Wearied by memory — fearing days to
 come,
 And dreading fate, and losing faith in
 men,
 We, with full heart, pray Heaven—Oh!
 take me home!

Ah! take me home!—I joy not in this
 world—

And I may in some slough of evil sink—
 Let me not down despair's abyss be
 hurled—

Ah! help me—for I totter on its brink!

Grant me more courage—though in truth
 I fear,

No stab of simple pain—nor *honest* foes!
 Ah! grant my heart be strong—my faith be
 clear,

Ere on this earth this struggling life shall
 close.

No! brave and open enemies are not
 Those that the weakest need most chiefly
 dread—

But those that stab in some unguarded
 spot—

But those, whose malice would not spare
 the dead!

STILL—A MYSTERY.

O GOD! the wandering out into the
 dark—

Amidst all things of foul, unwholesome
 birth—

And looking wearily for signs to mark
 The many twisted, winding paths of
 earth!

The listening vainly for some voice to
 come,

That shall but speak of comfort and of
 cheer—

And hearing but a distant roll of drum,
 A far-off sound of tumult and of fear!

Only the movements of some loathsome
 thing!

Only the utterance of some evil cry!

Only the shadow of the raven's wing,
 Flapping its way across a frowning sky!

Only the far-off glare of lurid flames,
 That scare all peaceful spirits from their
 sleep—

Where things are done to which men give
 no names,

Although just Heaven a record stern
 shall keep!

Is not that light a lurid light from hell,
 That o'er yon smoking ruins redly
 shines?—

One of the many gloomy facts that tell
 Earth still remains a realm of unread
 signs!

LIFE'S VARIED SEASONS.

ONCE I felt weary of this mortal life—

Around my path were sorrows but *too*
 rife—

Life seemed but winter—I forgot the
 spring!

Earth seemed but to her darker moods to
 cling.

Would there be ever warmth for me
 again—

Sweet violets to scent the winding
 lane—

Fair roses o'er the summer bowers to
 nod—

White daisies to bespangle the green
 sod?

Shall I hear, never more, the tender
 song

Of blackbird — only the shrill pipe of
 wrong,

The hen that calleth to the passers-by,
 As kite-wings quiver o'er her in the sky?

Shall not the purple grapes o'erhang my
 bowers,

The red plums glow through summer's
 happy hours—

And hunger smile to see the golden grains
 That ripen on the harvest's sunny plains?

Must it be always winter? Nay—not so!
 There come the hours of heavy rain, or
 snow;

But summer shall return—her wanderings
 o'er—

And autumn bring again her golden store!

AGAIN—THE CRY OF A DREAMER.

WHEREFORE, O dreams, thus haunt me!

I have sought

So long in quiet, death-like calm to lie!

Such "bitter-sweets" of memory have ye brought—

So many a weary and heart-broken sigh!—

Wherefore, O dreams, thus haunt me!
even when bright,

Something ye seem to bring in midnight hours,

As a forewarning of a coming blight,
Of poison that is breathing on our flowers—

Wherefore, O dreams, thus haunt me! 'tis not I

Who call ye, for I would ye were at rest!

Ye bring back all that I have prayed might die—

The bitter griefs that have so long oppressed.

Wherefore, O dreams, thus haunt me, and once more

Arouse wild thoughts of yet unconquered pain—

Oh! have I never felt these pangs before,
That I must needs yet suffer them again?

Ah!—must ye thus bring back mean eyes of spite,

Hard, bitter voices, jarring the calm air—

Voices malignant — wronging the sweet night—

Voices that seem to thrill us with despair—

Ye bring back memories of deserted hearths,

Ye bring back memories of ignoble wars—

The poisoned roses withered on earth's paths—

The false gems—sparkling as the midnight stars—

Wherefore, O dreams, thus haunt me! I have sought

So long in quiet death-like calm to lie!

Such "bitter-sweets" of memory have ye brought,

So many a weary and heart-broken sigh!

LOVE ENTERS NOT!—

LOVE enters not yon cottage — softly bowered

In roses—yet she turneth from it still—

Fair buds o'er all the trellis-work have flowered,

Yet love goes forth to seek the plain and hill.

Yes! swiftly passing through the open gate,
She leaves all these, to their own chosen doom,—

For on her ear the accents of cold hate,
Strike colder than were voices from the tomb!

There groweth in that garden bitter rue,
And plants whose perfume is but sick,
or faint,

Forget-me-nots lose there their tender blue,

The holy lily even hath a taint—

The winds blow shrilly round—from north and east,

They enter every out-house, every shed—

Under the bare trees stands the shivering beast,

The dead leaves fall on his desponding head!—

Love cannot linger here—and seeks no more

Admittance, though the hour shall soon be late—

She knocks no longer at that thrice-barred door,

But passes sadly through the opened gate.

A NOBLE PART—RARELY
DISPLAYED!

"A noble part of every true life is to learn to undo what has been wrongly done."—Quoted from the *Bournemouth Observer*, Jan. 16th, 1884.

THAT "noble part" is one for ever, here,
Unknown to some!—The mind that loves mean things,

That is most sneaking, false and insincere,
Is just the mind that conscience rarely
stings.

I know of some whose vile acts, as a load,
Heavier than lead, should press them
down to earth,
Had they a "nobler part" in their
abode!—

Or anything that was of saintly worth!

The mean of earth *themselves* know often
not!

No thrilling voice within their souls shall
speak

To warn them theirs is an ignoble lot,
And bid them for a prouder path to seek.

Shall he, who hath no eye for colour, feel
The tawdriness of colours he hath used?
Shall he, who feels no love, nor Christian
zeal,

Know when another's strength hath been
abused?

Shall he whose soul is poor and vulgar,
know

The bitter sins 'twere well he had con-
fessed!—

The shame of many a coarse and evil
blow,

Of treachery, that so oft hath poisoned
rest!

Ah! I am not a cynic—though I own
I have seen but too much wrong-doing
here,

But still!—a soul like this is little known—
A rarity—upon this world's career!

"CLOUDS WITHOUT WATER."*

"CLOUDS without water!"—we have seen
them pass—

And missed the freshening sound of
the summer rain,

And the daisies sprang not from the
withered grass,

And the violets scented not the country
lane.

The flowers the light of a smiling sky shall
miss,

The rose and the lily's opening leaves
are chill—

One hears the bitter sound of the east
wind's hiss,

As it sweeps the wood, the valley, and
the hill—

As "clouds without water" have we known
some lives,

From whence is a dreary darkness, if
no more—

And though a plant of the stronger roots
survives,

The bloom of the fairer, sweeter ones is
o'er.

They are souls without charity, and their
bitter breath

Makes the shorn lamb shiver, in both
field and wood,

They often come as the harbinger of death,
Ah!—rarely, we fear, as the messenger
of good!

Clouds without water, in my life have
been—

They have spread a gloom o'er many a
weary hour,

They have shadowed many a fair and
sunny scene—

Then passed—and the sun shone out
with a sweeter power!

"I DREAMT A DREAM, THAT WAS NOT ALL A DREAM!"

ONCE on a time a Poet† dreamt a dream
Of lovely women—one that might besem
Poetic, rather than *mere* human vision,
Whose thoughts of love are oft of some—
precision!!

But there are other, purer fancies—those
Of summer wanderings—when the fragrant
rose

And lily bloom beneath those mystic skies
That shine upon our closed, yet seeing
eyes!

* These lines were suggested by a beautiful sermon we heard preached by our old friend, the
Rev. G. Stopford Ram, at St. Peter's Church, Bournemouth, December, 1883.

† Byron.

Fair coloured visions these, though scarce
divine,
Through which a soft, enchanting light
may shine,
By which our wandering souls we may
allure
To regions—*chiefly* beautiful and pure!

Sweet scenes! from which when rudely we
awaken,
From the fair arms of slumber roughly
shaken,
To call their sunshine back, we seek in
vain:
Those fair, sweet skies may not be ours
again!

But once far other visions haunted one
Who, wearied, when the arduous day was
done,
Closed the sad eyes that hopelessly had
shed,
Aye! *seas* of tears, and slumbered as one
dead!

Yet, into far-off, long departed days,
Her unchecked fancy but too freely
strays,
Through unknown regions, into which were
brought
The hideous fancies of unbridled thought.

Then came into her sad vicinity,
One of an evil mind, a jealous eye,
Who, when it saw the sufferer laid thus
low,
That black hour seized, to deal—a devil's
blow!

Whatever shameless things those lips might
frame—
However they might cloud another's
name,
With hardy falsehoods, welded with coarse
spite,
None, in that dreary hour, could set them
right!

Oh! such a creature,—seasoning truth with
lies,—
Reminds one of the bite that petri-
fies,
And kills all sounder flesh around the
sting—
Not Hell itself could hold a viler thing!

Even so sting insects of a foul repute,
Neither the tender blossom, nor the fruit
Escapes pollution from the hateful
stain—
Escapes some stab, of ignominious pain.

The world is rich in poisons—even its
needs
Require them — poisoned herbage!
poisoned weeds!
Potent for good, not rarely—but still more
Potent for evil, all the wide world o'er!

Who shall defy them?—aye! shall even
one
Who, through this great world hath a race
to run?
While dreaming in the earth's more peace-
ful bowers,
His head may chance to rest on rancorous
flowers!

Who shall escape a cobra? Not the tread
Of victor even, o'er the fields of dead!
Not the pale sister o'er the sick man bend-
ing—
Not the physician, to his wounds attend-
ing.

Who shall escape a viper—not the child
Straying through meadows, or through
coppice wild—
Nor yet the noble forms—the noble years
Of Nestors, nor a Saint Cecilia's tears!

Thou may'st be sinless—yes! thou may'st
be pure,
Yet is there nothing in this world so sure
As that, when gathering earth's most glow-
ing posies,
Some asp shall sting thee, from amongst
the roses!

TIME'S CLEARER VISION.

TIME passes—bringing often clearer eyes
When we would rather still remain as
blind—
'Tis sometimes pitiful—this growing wise—
When age, by clearer vision grows un-
kind!

Why let us not deluded still remain!
Believing in the hypocrite and sneak?

Why bring this sadder knowledge to the
brain
That pales the happy flush upon the
cheek?

Why show us that the friends whom once
we trusted

Are those whose secret joy is to betray—
Whose hearts with very selfishness are
crusted,

The while with unctuous steps they go
their way!

Ah!—take it all in all, *it is as well*

When we shall wear before our eyes no
veil,

So not to have, at close of life, to tell
Too human, and too often told a
tale!

Whatever *is*, believe is for our good!—

Man sees not the beginning—nor the
end—

Our fate may not be always understood,
Yet FAITH is—and shall always stand—
our friend!

O LOVE! TRUE LOVE.

O LOVE! true love—even nobler—even
more brave

That sin dares claim of thee some “bitter
wages”—

Thy name, thy deathless name, shall time
engrave,

Aye!—even upon the very “Rock of
Ages!”

The serpent tempts thee, sometimes, in
dark days,

To pause—its evil self to stay, and
greet—

Thou goest forth again upon thy ways,
Bruising its loathsome head with thy
strong feet—

Earth sometimes brings thee evil fruit to
taste—

Surrounds thee with a crowd of hell’s
own liars—

Lures thee into some viper-haunted waste,
And tears thy tender feet with vengeful
briars—

Dark clouds hang over thy devoted head—
Beside thee stalks the grim form of
despair—

The roses on thy path lie blighted—dead—
The violets sweeten now no more the
air:

Yet shalt thou pass on through the evil
night,

Nor yet o’erwhelmed by earth’s most
cruel blast—

Then come the hours when, standing in
Heaven’s light,

Men see the troubles of thy ways are
passed!

LOVE—THE GREATER!

To —.

AYE!—if my grief and sorrow have been
great,

My love—believe me—hath been greater
still—

If I have learnt the lesson here of hate,
I *know not* one more sad—of Love’s
slow chill.

If I have known mad tempests rend the
skies—

If I with bleak, unsparing winds have
met—

If I have looked up with despairing
eyes,

And thought the fairer stars of Life had
set—

So have I known more glorious summer
hours

Than lips or pen of mine can ever
paint,

Paths that seemed strewn with Heaven’s
most lovely flowers,

Beside which hue of roses seemed but
faint.

Love hath watched ever with her faithful
eyes!—

Not only through the fierce hours of a
storm,

But through the dead chill of Icelandic
skies—

Her voice was tender—her hand-clasp
was warm!

Heaven surely shall not be more bright and fair
 Than earth still seems in some sweet moods of hers—
 When angel forms seem floating through the air—
 Whose passing the closed leaves of roses stirs—

Aye!—if my grief and sorrow have been great,
 My love—believe me—hath been greater still—
 If I have learnt the lesson here of hate,
 I *know not* one more sad—of Love's slow chill.

ONE'S SNEAKING FOES.

("CURSED IS HE WHO SMITETH HIS
 NEIGHBOUR SECRETLY.")

"Do good by stealth and blush to find it fame"—
 So veil—it may be wise—thy words of praise—
 But mask not thus the words of bitter blame,
 Lest it the hand of mean revenge betrays.

Do good by stealth—but *stab* not in the dark;
 (*That* is against all rules of honest fight!)
 Shoot thou thine arrows bravely at the mark,
 And not from whence thou hidest from the light!

Whoso is mean enough to fight in shade—
 To hide his features with a well-set mask—
 Deserves that he in darkness be betrayed,
 No pity for his fate need any ask!

At least be *honourable*! not a thing
 Too much cared for by *some*, and in *some* places!
 Yes! there are those who only *dare* to sting
 When they can safely hide their sneaking faces!

Let cowards fight with cowards—one is not
 Greatly concerned about so poor a lot—
 But let not one who stands in light revealed
 Be stabbed by one who meanly stabs,
concealed!

TO A SLANDERER.

STUDY some better page of life—'tis late—
 But better so than that thou should'st not turn
 Thy thoughts from thy poor visions—nor await
 With anxious thought some higher things to learn.

I do not wish thee ill, although the ill
 That thou hast sought to do me hath been great—
 Nor would I wish thy dreams of life to fill,
 As thou did'st mine, with the fierce notes of hate.

Thy hour to injure and to wound is past—
 Thy bitter schemes for mean revenge have failed—
 What term of power thou had'st is o'er at last—
 That lurid light from Hell, below, hath paled—

Thy will to hurt seemed ever strong and keen—
 That it betrayed thee was no fault of thine—
 Go thou—and seek for paths more sweet and clean—
 Whereon some wholesome rays, at last, may shine—

Thou could'st not wound me, to the "bitter end!"
 Nor break one hour of later, calmer rest—
 I have not lost through thee, *one* faithful friend,
 Only the false have left me. And so *best!*

CURIOUS "CHRISTIANS"

THEY walked not in the paths of watchful day,

But took a twilight and a tortuous way;
They took not roads that led through *open* light,

But those that kept them *out* of curious sight!

Few were more feeble in their thoughts than they—

They even feared in sight of men to pray
Lest any call them hypocrites — and sneer!—

They lived as though in durance kept by fear!

And, therefore, nothing noble, nothing strong

Was in those paths that they pursued so long—

From toil in open fields they seemed to shrink,

For dread of what the WORLD might say, or think!

They lived as though a claim to Heaven to win

Was less to strive for good than turn from sin—

Not work for others' benefits,—alone
Do that which most conduces to your own!

Pray for thyself—*think* of thyself—and let God's punishment await those who forget
Their own salvation, as they strive for others!—

Shall thus Heaven be for thee?—not for thy brothers!

VOICES—FROM STAGNANT AND
SECLUDED PATHS.

"There are walks of life and situations that can hardly be called walks, so secluded and stagnant are they, in which collision [in the race of life] is avoided by the simple absence of direction, or motive of any kind."—*Times*, September 26th, 1885.

AYE! from these stagnant, these secluded paths

Rise many voices that are coarse, or vain—

From sunless dwellings, and from sleepy hearths

Hear ye the sluggard and the fool complain—

Walks they take not but they peer here and there

To point out some disfigurement, or stain,

Shriek that your pastures are no longer fair—

Their necks to see depths of foul waters—crane!

Life's paths, if difficult, as sweet and wide,
They will not take, but give them an ill-name!—

For conscience wounds them sharply in their pride,

Although they veil with care their secret shame.

There are no roads in life more poor and mean

Than those which grumblers follow on this earth—

They see but autumn mists on summer's scene—

In all things they depreciate weight and worth—

Aye! trust not *such* philosophers!—they may

Assume to know the very depths of Hell,
But dream not of the sweetness of earth's day,

Nor of bright regions from whence Satan fell.

CERTAIN LESSONS OF LIFE.

NOTHING thou ever doest in this life
But soon or late, may serve to bitter eyes

And minds, as the provocative to strife,
From those who are nor honest, true, nor wise.

There are those who will view each simple deed

That thou may'st do, in such unrighteous way

That they will sow thy path with evil seed,
And swear thou art the sower—and not they!

These lessons, these most bitter lessons, we
Have learnt not once or twice, but countless times—

So spiteful are the eyes with which some see

That even *virtues* they account as crimes!

Candour of speech may oft reveal the true,
The brave and lofty soul—but these of whom

We speak, have ever but the upstart's view,

And spy a worm upon the fairest bloom.

We know them well—a hateful class is this—

The yet more hateful, that, beside thy hearth,

They will beguile thee—by a Judas-kiss—
While poisoned fruits they scatter on thy path!

A TRUTH SLOWLY AND HARDLY LEARNT!

'Tis hard for those who dwell in climates
warm,

To understand the frigid, frozen Pole—
'Tis hard for one who ne'er was in a storm
Not to be startled when the thunders roll!

Because *they* talents lack, why need they hate

All those who have them, with such bitter spite?

Because *theirs* is a humble, lowly state,
Need they loathe those who sit enthroned in light?

Envy has always dwelt in hearts of men!—

In those of poor and meagre sorts, at least—

They long for things beyond *their* reach and ken,

And scorn the teachings, or of Book, or Priest!

This truth was taught to us long, long ago—

This tale of Envy's dark and bitter stain—

One truly hard *oneself* to live to know,
In such wise as 'to scarce forget again!

'Tis true that many rest beside their hearths,

To fan an evil, rarely cooling glow!

That many darkly shadow their *own* paths,

By the vile seeds of hatred that they sow!

YET I REPINE NOT.

THE plains of earth bear many bitter crops—

The leaves of forests by harsh winds are stirred—

But I have been upon the mountain tops
Where but the voice of Love divine is heard!

And human hearts are often full of wrath,
And almost as though fresh from Hell seem they—

But I have walked on Love's own fragrant path,

And gathered of her roses by the way!

I have been down into the hell of pain—
And where was heard but sad, heart-rending cries—

When evil demons only seemed to reign—
Where mocking spirits only met mine eyes—

I have seen many of earth's sadder places,
Wherein had withered sweet and healthy flowers—

And therein met a mob of mocking faces,
Who mouthed their foulest lies in troubled hours—

Yet I repine not—I—for I have seen
With grateful eyes Heaven's fairest, brightest plains—

Have followed where the steps of love have been—

And listened—rapt—to her most glorious strains!

FAIR IS THE HOUR OF EVE,

BESIDE THE SHORE.

FAIR is the hour of eve—beside the shore—
When gulls and martins rest within the caves,

When one hears but the plashing of an
oar,
As some late boat comes homeward on
the waves—

The world of cities lies so far away
From this sweet realm of silence and of
peace,
And earth grows slowly colourless and
grey,
As one by one her many voices cease—

And yet—this deep and solemn calm be-
neath—
Lies,—who knows what—of wild and
reckless powers—
Even as the bony hand of silent death
Grasps the unseen, deep rootlets of our
flowers.

The stars are veiled from us on stormy
nights,
We find their places by no earthly
chart—
Our darkness the pale moon no longer
lights,
The brighter visions of our life depart—

Therefore lift we from earth our filmy
gaze,
And as we hold *one hand*, both firm and
strong,
Look far beyond our troubled earthly ways
To realms where there is neither grief,
nor wrong.

MUSING.—XVI.

WOODS—solemn woods that fringe the
rock-bound shore—
Fair meadow lands that cattle wander o'er,
Full of tranquillity—of peace ye are—
Ye that were once but trampled fields of
war!

The pine-trees' ever-melancholy sighs,
The distant break of waves, the sea-bird's
cries,

The tiny titmouse with its ringing call,
Alone we hear, as evening shadows fall—

O Peace! if on this earth thou can'st be
found,
Thou restest here on this old "battle-
ground"!—

These fields of grass and corn—where the
wild rose,
Ungathered in their circling hedges grows!

God knows—when heavy storms may veil
our skies,
And crashing thunder drown the pine
wood's sighs!—
And there are many graves amongst our
trees—
And solemn knells ring sometimes on the
breeze!

Death—death and sorrow!—ah! the fairest
spot
That mortals cherish shall exclude ye not—
There is no home—however bright and
fair—
But knows some hour of sorrow, or
despair.

SELF-CONQUEST.

To —.

I KNOW thee well, O thou loved friend of
mine!
Not boastful of the victories that are
thine—
Not of the *greatest* conquest man can gain,
The triumph of the heart and of the
brain—

The victory of one's self—one even so
rare
It well might drive most mortals to
despair—
One in a myriad defeats, at best,
And less gained by the free than the
oppressed.

Old men, we see, go often to the grave,
In all things—but self-conquest—strong
and brave—
Unable still that conquest to acquire,
Gained only by fierce "passing through
the fire."

The hair grows white with trouble, and
there lies
Much of Life's conflict in the saddened
eyes—
And in the calmer tone, the sobered pen,
Men read the battles won by other men.

Conquests that some can never make—the
 one
 Of all Life's races hardest to be
 run,
 Of all Life's lessons hardest to be
 taught,
 Of all Life's battles hardest to be
 fought!

AN OLD FRIEND, NOW NO MORE.

(NOT A FEEBLE WOMAN!)

No bitter, evil-minded woman—she!
 Not always searching, as it were, to
 find
 Where some mean fault, or vulgar wrong
might be,
 To cheer a scandalmonger's greedy
 mind.

Not always anxious to point out some flaw
 In others' tenets, actions, or good
 name—
 And, as to show her great respect for law,
 Proclaiming—*pour exemple*—some one's
 shame!

She spoke with tenderness of other's woes
 And did not always occupy her days
 By boasting of her *charity*!—to those
 She sought to lead unto her — *pious*
 ways!

She cared not to win flattery, from a
friend—
 And perhaps, some day, to figure in her
 "Book!" *
 But lived for just a *simpler*, nobler end!
 As might be seen in every step she took.

'Twas scarcely for *her* soul sufficient
 glory—
 And one of the chief ends for which to
 live,
 To be the heroine of some poor story,
 Some useless lessons to the world to
 give!

No! not one of your spiteful women—she!
 Not always searching, as it were, to
 find
 Where some mean fault, or vulgar wrong
might be,
 To cheer a scandalmonger's greedy
 mind.

WHAT A DYING HUSBAND SAID OF HIS WIFE.†

(AGAIN *not* A FEEBLE WOMAN.)

He said, when on his sad death-bed he
 lay,
 "No better woman ever breathed than
 she"—
 He spoke as life ebbed painfully away,
 And when her loved face he no more
 could see.

He bade all those within his room—yes,
all,
 Who stood to hear—that they should
 ne'er forget—
 Feebly and meekly as his words might
 fall—
 She was not one who for *herself* would
 fret:

That she had always of her children
 thought,
 Forgetting much of her own sufferings—
 And least of all, the lesson ever taught
 Of toiling for the praise it sometimes
 brings!

She was not one who spent her time in
 teaching
 The many sins and frailties of men!—
 Not one who spent her hours in bitter
 preaching—
 Either by fluent lips, or caustic pen—

His praise was broken but by bitter
 moan—
 And I know of no better, purer wreath
 Shall any widow wear, when left alone—
 Than praise bequeathed her by the lips
 of Death.

* One has heard of such cases.

† The father and mother of the Authoress.

A MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

YET was this wife much slandered in her day,

By the same lips that, somewhat later, spread

Foul slanders of her daughter—aye! for “they”

Were of the class to speak ill of the dead,

And living—*both*—nor showed they, ever, care

How far their lies might spread upon the air!

There are those to whom lies will come as lightly

As though they lay as feathers on the breast—

Who think invention only shows one *sprightly*—

Or as one far more clever than the rest!—

Who always, as their lips roll out their lies,

Will have a brighter sparkle in their eyes!

From such both suffered grievously—the mother

And daughter—more than lips can ever say—

Though later some their falsehoods fain would smother

They still will “crop up”—oft to their dismay—

For lies *sometimes* recoil—and it is said
May weigh on certain consciences — as lead!

I HAVE LOOKED INTO EYES.

I HAVE looked into eyes so full of hate
They could conceal not what lay stored within

A soul, oppressed by even a very weight
Of envy—*that*, the very vilest sin!—

So had I thought it strange were there no place

Where dark and bitter souls their faults might purge—

If only to be cleansed—for newer grace,
That from their darkness they might yet emerge!

And I have noted that the souls that swear
There is no purgatory—save *on earth*,—
Are not of souls the sweetest and most fair—

Not souls like those esteemed of higher worth!—

And I have thought—Shrink they from *fear*, that they—

With something — half like *instinct* — would persuade

Their friends there are no shadows but of *grey*—

Between Heaven and that *very* darkest shade?

To seek to hush the voice and blind the eyes

Of Conscience quickly leads to unbelief—
There needs descend fair angels from the skies,

If to the wavering they would bring relief!

LESSONS OF LIFE.

AYE! many bitter lessons we must learn—
Aye! many bitter lessons thou hast taught,

O life! of lips that but with falsehoods burn,

Of “love” that needs by flattery be bought—

As of religious cant on lips most mean—
Of “holy purity,” in hearts but vile—
Of long-worn “saintly” robes, no longer clean—

Of mouths that cannot smile an honest smile—

Of the pretended friend that shall betray—
Of the pretended Christian that shall strew,

Instead of helping sorrow, on her way,
Thereon but leaves of bitterness and rue—

Of souls that only listen unto Sin,
Then hasten o’er the earth its notes to sound—

Who choose to swear men live this life to win

Only the evil prizes that abound—

For one needs learn that life is here a
school
Where shall be gathered men of varied
races—
And here we meet the liar, the knave,
the fool—
Keeping of nobler souls both names and
places!

THINK OF THYSELF!

To —.

THOU can'st not now thine evil paths
amend,
Thou can'st not now thy hateful past
recall,
Either for enemy—or yet for friend,—
Death's gloomy mantle shall between us
fall.

It is, alas! a sentence meet for some,
Whose deeds were bitter—bitter to the
last!—

A blighting shadow shall between us come,
Whenever thou would'st look back to
the past!

Go! henceforth turn thy thoughts to better
ways,

Let not thy thoughts invent another's
shame,
Let thy mouth *sometimes* be the mouth to
praise,
Not evermore be only one—to blame!

Let Charity's sweet, gracious mantle fall
Upon the sins that cumber earth's fair
ground,

Open thy heart to Mercy's tender call,
Not only to despair, or horror's sound—

Lastly—think of *thyself*!—go thou and
pray

That thy self-righteousness may be for-
given,—

And that thou henceforth take a nobler
way,

Even though thy robe of grace be darkly
riven.

So long as thou may'st on the earth
remain,

Look back with bitter and repentant
tears,

Then may thy prayers even now prove not
in vain,
Although thy sins were sins—of *many*
years!

CONTEMPLATION.

FULL many dreary souls are there upon
the earth—

We thought! and things that seem of
poorest worth

Fill the oppressive hours of many days—
Crawl as shall snails across our onward
ways.

The voice of love is stilled by that of
hate—

The little seek to "elbow out" the
great!—

Our Lilliputians of all sorts crowd round
Where should but step of giant shake the
ground.

The eyes of tender but not brilliant light
Are outshone by the vulgar eyes of spite—
The voice of gentle, sympathetic sound
Is by the voice of coarse assumption
drowned.

The weeds will often crush out tender
flowers—

The roses scatter, under heavy showers—
The sour worm-eaten fruits outweigh the
sweet—

Rough paths outnumber smooth ones, for
men's feet—

The planets count not like the myriad
stars—

Our trivial conflicts outweigh noble wars—
Mean insects breed upon earth's noblest
scene—

Yes! still the great seem o'erpowered by
the mean!

WORDS OF COMFORT.

FOR ONE CALUMNIATED.

LITTLE by little false shapes fade away,
As we pass on into a later day,—
Little by little muttering voices die,
Into the silence of the sunset sky—

Little by little pass they into gloom,
 Until they rest in a deep, festering tomb,
 And hands that move them must be brave
 indeed,
 They find but foul dust and unfragrant
 weed!

These weeds shall blister even the vicious
 hand
 That hath sown poison-seeds upon the
 land;—
 They have thrown blighting shadows on
 the paths
 Of simple ones who brought them to their
 hearths!

Yet evil seeds hath God allowed on earth,
 That we prize more our plants of noble
 worth,—
 Until we know, though in a later hour,
 That maggots breed within a smiling
 flower.

Love changes not because the east wind
 blows,
 But tends more carefully each tender
 rose—
 And herbs and corn, sweet-apples and the
 peach,
 She plants where blighting breaths shall
 rarely reach!

LOVE—THAT “ENDURETH FOR EVER.”

I WANDER out upon the ocean shore—
 The time is one of calm and holy
 peace—

The day of heavy darkness now is o’er,
 And Enmity’s loud, bitter voices cease.

I look up into calm and faithful eyes,
 Upon a true and loving arm I press—
 I hear the voice of old—so ever wise,
 The voice of an undying tenderness—

The voice of love—that shall “endure for
 ever”—

Not through bright days alone—but days
 of gloom—

Nothing the links that bind us now shall
 sever,

Save the grim hand that draws us to the
 tomb—

For love is full of trust and love is great—
 And even its later blossoms shall not
 blight—

It hears with scorn the jarring voice of
 hate,
 That slowly passes on into the night—

And still beneath the glorious stars we
 pace,

My love and I—nor weary footsteps
 know—

And still I see, on his uplifted face,
 Love’s ever faithful — ever God-like
 glow!

ONE GRANDER *EVEN* THAN

ROME!

SEE Rome and die!—enthusiasts have
 said!

Aye! but there is one grander even than
 Rome!

And I would rather in my grave lie dead,
 Under the sky’s unsympathising dome
 Than ne’er have gazed into the glorious
 eyes

Of Love — that but the fools of earth
 despise!

Tales there have been of many a “god-
 like shape”

Born, as we read, into this world of
 ours—

Yet such as from the realms below
 escape—

To haunt awhile our fragile earthly
 bowers—

Whose beauty is but in its glorious mould,
 Whose heart—alas!—whose heart is deadly
 cold!—

Aye! there are those of earth who dis-
 believe

In heaven—so in heaven’s greatest gift
 to earth—

And Love round these her tender arms
 might wreath

Only to waste her gifts of priceless
 worth—

The fire from heaven is ever wanting there,
 To fill a new Prometheus with despair!

WHEN THE WORLD WAS YOUNG!

In the sweet spring-time, when the world
was young,
Full many a fair and noble lay was
sung—

Or borrowed, even, from some ancient
page—

Of Love's young life—of Love's yet
nobler age—

Truly is Love both old, *and* young, none
know

When Love's bright presence gladdened
first the scene,

And charged pale winter oft with sum-
mer's glow—

And made the streamlet sparkling—the
woods green—

Now those who never o'er its scenes have
ranged

Pretend the world is changed—and *sadly*
changed

The violet's perfume, or the rose's glory
They now declare is but an "old-world
story!"

All things that once evoked the poet's
praise

They term the "echo of departed days"—
The voice of happy times that are no
more—

Whose faint reverberation, even, is o'er!

Oh! care not what such carping spirits
say—

Themselves are framed in poor and com-
mon clay!

For still we find, as in the days gone by,
That men can live and love—and dare to
die!

WAIT!

BE not despondent at the autumn leaves,
Nor shudder when disease and death are
rife—

'Tis but the weak, unfaithful heart that
grieves—

Upbraiding the decrees of mortal life.

Be not despondent o'er the drooping
flowers—

Nor o'er thinned flocks and o'er
diminished droves—

Regard thou not the winter's heavy
showers—

Nor heed the cold winds whistling
through thy groves.

Fret not because of yon o'ershadowing
cloud,

Bringing the gloom of a malignant
night—

Let not thy head in weary thought be
bowed—

Wait! for beyond are the fair realms of
Light!

Oh! though by birds have some fair fruits
been eaten,

While he who o'er them watched hath
been away—

There shall be many left that still shall
sweeten—

Whose luscious taste shall cheer a later
day—

Be not dismayed to hear the billows
roar—

Or by the clouds of the unsmiling
skies—

Spring shall return to bless thy lands once
more—

And sunlight shine once more into
thine eyes!

WORDS OF DEEP THANKFULNESS.

AYE! I thank God, that I lose not my
trust

In love and constancy as years roll by,
In good deeds that even "blossom in the
dust,"

In noble actions done beneath our
sky—

The lessons that are taught by grey-
haired Time

Are—of the need for the unwearied
pleading

Of charity—of pardon for much crime—
At least of sin more kindly judgment

needing—

But—one sees oft how men condemn the
sin

And sinner both—and therein lies the
wrong—

For Mercy never her fair crown could win
If she could sing no sweeter, gentler
song—

Let man judge not his fellows—he knows
not

Of what may, in God's view, oft
palliate

Our sins and wipe away the leprous-spot,
Nay! bring His gracious pardon—even
though late—

For God can judge in life as after death
That there are *seeming* sinners who are
saints

That noble virtues often lie beneath
The outer coat that vice so deftly paints.

LOOKING UP INTO THE HEAVENS!

OH! looking up into the heavens, what
time,

The meditative hours of midnight chime,
In summer's reign of tenderness and
balm—

When even the troubled earth, awhile, is
calm—

One loves to muse on worlds unknown
and fair,

To picture the glad spirits dwelling
there—

Worlds to reward us for much suffering
here—

Worlds with no mists of grief, or sick'ning
fear—

And whose inhabitants, it may be, know
Nought of this earth's infinitude of woe,
Who through a very realm of sunlight
move,

With eyes that ever shine with perfect
love—

Call it a fancy!—even as you will!
It is a fancy that shall ever thrill
My soul, and uplift my still longing eyes,
Away from all the gloom of our own
skies!—

That vision of a home for ever fair—
Far—far removed from this dark world's
despair.

SWEET ARE THE USES OF ADVERSITY!

(AN ANSWER TO A FRIEND'S LETTER!)

SWEET are the uses of Adversity—
So men have said—so men shall still
repeat—

Although her lessons bring us many a
sigh,
And many an hour of trouble and tired
feet.

Sweet are the uses of Adversity—
Although she may oppress thee with
dull care—
Bringing the tear-drops to a weary eye—
And clouding skies before but warm and
fair!

Sweet are the uses of adversity—
Although of treachery she shall sharply
tell—
Or of a slanderer's glib and greasy lie—
Of those that seem as pupils but of hell.

The lessons that are hers at least will
teach
What friends 'tis well to choose on
Life's mixed roads—
The hypocritic sermons some will preach—
The toads and snakes that hide in fair
abodes.

And if it shows men that this life hath
storms
It tells them of that boundless love that
warms—
Not cools—beneath the storms of darkest
night—
Faith holding, still, in the return of light!

VARIED LESSONS.

So Life is changeful on this earth! and
yet,
Though many bitter lessons she hath
taught,

*Do ye not her more tender ones forget,
The sunlight, also, that her steps have
brought!*

If she shall give thee lessons sadly wise—
If she shall many a sweet dream destroy,
Yet shall she also come with glowing
eyes—
And bring sweet tears of gratitude and
joy.

If she shall tell of hearts of spite and
hate—
If she hath sounded notes of poor con-
ceit—
If she hath tempests brought to thy estate,
Or with hot plough-shares seared thine
unshod feet—

Yet are her hands oft full of fragrant
flowers—
Flowers that survive the hailstones and
the cold—
Yet hath she summer brought into thy
bowers,
And brightened them with apples of red
gold—

And if revengeful passions she shall show,
So also the rich warmth and strength of
love—
And cause thy bounding heart to gladly
glow,
As with a light sent to it from above.

THE BREAK OF MORN.

(A REBUKE TO A COMPLAINING SOUL.)

HEAR you the blackbird from the haw-
thorn singing—
Hear you the bells that from the distance
chime—
Hear you the hum of bees, now gaily
winging
Their way to fields of clover—banks of
thyme?

Hear you the distant breaking of the
sea—
The songs of boatmen, coming from the
shore—

The wind that resteth on the calm pine
tree,
To whisper of the stormy days of yore?

Hear you the notes of peace, that echo
still—
The low of wandering cattle—on the
air—
The bleat of goats that cometh from the
hill,
All sounds of earth, that seem so passing
fair?

From the tall elm trees cometh the sweet
song
Of thrushes singing here at eve, at
morn—
The plover's cry that is no cry of wrong—
The partridge calling from the fields of
corn.

Joy dwelleth still upon this earth of ours—
The moon is fair by night—the sun by
day—
The roses blossom still in greenwood
bowers
Go thou, rejoice—rejoice upon thy way!

HAND IN HAND.

LINES TO —.

MY own beloved one!—as we, hand in
hand,
Go onwards underneath a later sky,
We mark the shadows darken on the
land,
And know the storm hath sunk into a
sigh!

Some flowers are withered ere the close
of day,
Some fruits are eaten by the worm
within—
*But thou, love, hast gone forth upon thy
way,
To comfort sorrow and to combat sin.*

Oh! yet that heart, so tender at the core,
What poignant sorrows hath it often
felt—
And though Adversity's fierce storms are
o'er
Still are there scars of blows that she
hath dealt!

Aye! thinking of thy many trials—O
 love,
 I muse upon thy courage to the
 last—
 Thou hast been ever gentle as the
 dove,
 Yet as the eagle did'st withstand the
 blast.

I cannot be as thou, but I revere
 That calm and patient courage; would
 that I

Had borne as thou hast borne, nor idle
 tear,
 Nor fitful moan, had ever made thee
 sigh!

So—my beloved one—do we, hand in
 hand,
 Go onward, underneath a later sky,
 And mark the shadows darken on the
 land,
 And know the storm hath sunk into a
 sigh!

WISE HINTS FROM AN OLD GHOST ;

AND OTHER POEMS.

IN THE WATCHES OF THE NIGHT.

1886.

INTRODUCTION.—ECHOES OF A SONG!

"O LIFE! if thou art an idle, aimless day
 The fools on the road may weep, but
 the wise rejoice!
 'Tis better to laugh than sigh, on our
 onward way!"
 So—mockingly, sang the Cynic's careless
 voice

"There may be storms for awhile, but the
 storms blow o'er—
 And clouds may form, but the clouds
 again pass by—
 Then the heedless sun shines out, as he
 shone before—
 And Life is scarcely worthy of even a
 sigh!

"It is well to laugh at the Poet's morbid
 song,—
 He sings of the gloom, of the beating
 storms of night,—
 But oh! if the sorrows of Life must needs
 be long
 It were wise to dance, while the sky,
 o'erhead is bright!

"Our life we know, is only a passing
 phase—
 A flower, that is lightly slain by the
 north-wind's breath—
 A vision that even may vanish, as we
 gaze—
 That is puffed away in a moment by
 strong death—

"O Life! again—if thou art an idle
 day
 The fools on the road may weep, but
 the wise rejoice!
 'Tis better to laugh than sigh, on our on-
 ward way!"
 So—mockingly, sang the Cynic's careless
 voice.

WISE HINTS FROM AN OLD GHOST.

OLD ÆSOP LOQUITUR!

FRIEND! many *Asses* in the Lion's
Skin
 Still Walk the *Earth*, if *Men* would but
 Believe it!
 In many *Cases* with disguise so *Thin*
 'Tis but the *Dullard* who shall not
 Perceive it!

Our *Cats* will oft attempt the *Tiger's*
Grip—

Though they have not the *Tiger's*
Greater *Power*—

The *Fragile Boat* will ape the stronger
Ship,

And Proudly sail away his *Little Hour*!

The *Ape* will plume himself that he is
Man!

The *Kite* believes that he hath *Eagle-*
Eyes—

For everywhere it is the *Pigmy's Plan*
To thus Assume the larger, nobler *Size*!

Each thinks that he is wiser than *All*
Others!

Each thinks his *Life* shall fill some
Goodly Page!—

Looks down Contemptuously upon his
Brothers—

And Struts his little *Hour* upon the
Stagel

Again, the *World* is but a *World* of
Asses!

Most *Men* but act the *Fool* in *Others'*
Eyes,

Each—while his *Brother's Follies* he sur-
passes,

Just Deems *himself* the *Wise*st of the
Wise!

“PLAIN WORDS”—IN RETURN!

O *ÆSOP*! there is an *especial Ass*—

The very biggest of an o'ergrown class,
To whom our works seem as a deadly
blight!

And whom one really needs to pity
sadly!

He—wildly looking neither to the right
Nor left, dashes his head against a brick
wall madly!

Ah, yes! we pity him with all our heart,
Although our heart is neither soft—nor
pappy!

Tell us what we can do, then, on *our*
part

To make that withered soul of his more
happy?*

We *can't* give up our volumes—*can* we
now?

Even to bring peace back to his blighted
brow!

Oh! if he would but *close his eyes*—you
know

Whene'er a volume looms before his
sight,

It might just ease that heavy weight of
woe,

That cometh *through* the “*Watches* of
the *Night*,”—

Yes! if he *would* in sleep but close his
eyes

He *might* become calm — peaceful — *even*
wise!

A COMMON SECRET!

“That secret to each fool—that he's an ass!
See the “*Ship of Fools*.”—*Cornhill* for April, 1883.

“*THAT* secret to each fool—that he's an
Ass!”

Hard for our fools to comprehend, in-
deed!

Each hopes he for a Solomon might pass,
Nor dreams that any his mean face can
read.

That secret that seems rarely here revealed
To him whom it most nearly must
concern!

Though often with such little pains con-
cealed

One sometimes wonders *why* he cannot
learn!

None are so blind as those that *will* not
see!—

Yet this, in truth, applies not to his
case—

He doth not even wilful seem to be—

He wears a placid smile upon his face!

Yes! much of dear content is on their
features,

Each time that such review themselves
—one sees!

And one would hardly like—the poor, dear
creatures,

To undeceive and put them “*out* of
case!”

* Alas!—there came no answer.

At all events a task not *quite* too easy!

Unless *yourself* would be esteemed an ass,

Or care not that your life proves henceforth "breezy,"

Don't seek to smash your friend's pet Looking-Glass!

OUR SELF-CONSTITUTED JUDGES!

TRULY are some on earth so wondrous wise

That nothing shall escape their "knowing" eyes!

They read the secrets of the world above—

And preach the "nonsense of what men call *Love*"—

They judge all brains and souls—and they pronounce

That most have barely of good sense an ounce,

Rather is each a fool, who cannot tell

That there is nought in Heaven, or nought in Hell!

And they speak loudly of degenerate times,

Believe in the dense blackness of our crimes,

And groan o'er this as but a fallen race,
Point out its sins in every clime and place!—

He who is seated on the judge's throne—

He who is^{*} raised above his fellow's heads,

Is there by *others'* acclaims—not his own
An honoured fame her wings above him spreads—

But self-made judges eagerly proclaim

That none are righteous, or clean-souled, as they!

They loudly talk about their fellows' shame,

And to the world their own pure virtues bray!

TO AN ESPECIALLY LOUD-VOICED JUDGE.

YET, Censor—with the small, conceited mind,

O Censor! — with the meanly-boasted wit,—

What makes thee thus presume to judge mankind,

And on the "wool-sack" with assurance sit?

Art thou, *indeed*, more learned than all others?—

And who hath given thee thy "high degrees"!

How did'st thou *probe* all secrets of thy brothers—

How plucked the sharp fruits of our modern trees?

Aye! tell us what thy titles are—and how,
And why, was given thee so high a place!—

Who placed that *tinsel* crown upon thy brow,

And bade thee thus condemn the human race!

Where hast thou been—into what secret places—

Into what haunts of vice — and of despair—

Finding in every spot some loathsome traces

Of unclean footsteps and of poisoned air?

Art thou of stately mien—of stature tall

Speak thou out boldly and thy words defend?—

Sit in the sunlight—high above us all—

That by thy counsels men their paths may mend?

THE "SECRETS" OF SOME WELL-KNOWN CHARACTERS!*

AYE! 'tis a funny world—as many say!

But those therein—as one must needs admit,

* See "A Common Secret," p. 491.

Who are *most* funny, at this present day,
Claim that they *don't belong* to it—one
bit!

Yet they have all those worldly attributes
Of which in ancient records we are
told—

The modern character completely suits
That which was stamped on it in days
of old!

They think themselves the "pure" ones,
even as once

Did certain holy, sanctimonious Jews—
Each cannot see that he is but a dunce,
And that such "piety" can be no *news*!

They dream that Heaven is meant for
them, alone,

That all "those others" are but dull,
or blind—

Assume that Heaven will surely be their
own,

And filled with, simply, spirits of *their*
kind!

Aye! — still such types upon the earth
remain,

Both of mankind's first virtues and first
crimes—

Our old streams wander through a new-
world plain,

But asses bray as in Judaic times!

A WOMAN OF THE "WRONG SORT!"

A FEVERISH interest seems she to possess
In all things faulty, in all household
hearth

The true, the good, of interest claim far
less

Than claim the crimes, or errors, of our
paths.

The sins of the great world upon its
way

Minds formed in this poor mould engage
the most—

They note each step that seems to go
astray,

Each careless ship that skirts an evil
coast!

The tales of virtue seem of little note

To them, compared with those of vice
and sin—

O'er all of *such* descriptions they will
gloat,

Their rapt attention these will surely
win!

Oh! if this woman of brave deeds shall
hear—

"How sweet is this"—she cries—"but
oh how rare!

Aye! so *unusual* that indeed we fear
Our hearts should still be groaning with
despair!"

"But *ought* not *honest* Virtue to be *shy*
And blushing!—*surely* 'tis a fatal bar

To glory when our deeds are blazoned
high—

No doubt by *interested* creatures!" —
Pah!

A BITTER SKY!

(LINES ABOUT A MISCHIEF-MAKER.)

MUCH sin upon this woman's soul must
lie—

One would not walk beneath *her* bitter
sky,

To note the evil vapours that float past,
While catching the shrill scream of eastern
blast—

For, from the meanest sentiments of spite,
This woman sows disunion, scatters blight,
And brings on old, or on enfeebled

days,
Unfair reproaches of unfaithful ways.

A woman eager her own "views" to
preach—

Yet needing much some one *her* soul
should teach—

A woman who assumed to even know
The secrets life contains of Love and
woe!—

A woman of a mind but ill informed,
And of a heart by charity unwarmed—

And who the meanest of conclusions drew
From even that hurtful little that she
knew!—

*Such as she should come out of their
retreat,*
And learn that earth hath flowers both
fresh and sweet—
Or evermore in silent shadow dwell,
Where they no falsehoods hear, no false-
hoods tell!

AGAIN—TO AN UNFORTUNATE STUDENT OF HUMANITY.

THESE but exaggerated views of life
Come from your having but one point of
view—
In looking only out for steps of strife,
And for the *darker* paths that men
pursue.

What people seek for, it is said, they
find!
Be it for sin's forlorn, unhappy state,
Or for the fair deeds of some gentle
mind,
Or for the actions of the strong and
great.

He who walks forth the evil but to
see
Will find too often that which he shall
seek—
The forest of the blighted, ill-grown tree,
The mist-filled vale, the mountain, bare
and bleak.

He who but into Folly's roadway goes
Knows not of those that are both pure
and sweet—
He who but foul, or ill-kept dwellings
knows
Needs wonder not if he hath unclean
feet!

He knoweth nothing of men's holier
hearths,—
Of hands and minds that are both true
and strong,
Let him go forth and *seek* for cleaner
paths—
And tune his cracked lyre to a nobler
song!

"PLAIN WORDS" VERSUS

"HINTS"!

YOU thought yourself so strong—the rest
so weak—
But who the truth to *such as you* could
speak!
Whose ears will never catch earth's finer
notes—
Only the bray of asses—bleat of goats!

And when one speaks, at last, 'tis not
for *you*,
Nor yet for *such as you* that Truth is
roused
To point out, sternly, the peculiar shoe
Worn by each ass that in thy fields—
caroused!

If Asses *can* carouse—a doubtful fact!—
And one we shall not trouble here to
prove—
Only, when one by asses is attacked
You can't regard them with *too* tender
love!

Each then becomes the worst of bores—
his bray
Disturbs the field, the village, and the
town—
It startles timid wanderers on their
way—
And can all sweet and tender music
drown!

Flogging might sometimes be the proper
thing—
Only the ass, he hath so tough a hide!
And those at whom he his vile heels may
fling
Are countless—for this world of ours is
wide!

THE VANITY OF SOME!

THE vanity of some is a disease,
So monstrous that you know not how
to treat it!
A self-laudation, with a jaunty ease,
Is theirs, that tries you greatly how to
meet it!

Yes! we declare we have heard people
say
Such sweet things *of themselves* one
hardly knew—
Nor is it any wonder!—in what way
Such loud self-admiration to construe!

Themselves they paint as *such* pure souls,
you know!
So freed from sin—*so* clean in heart and
hand—
One almost hopes some “holy gust” may
blow,
And so transport them to — a *better*
land!

Their many charities—their self-denials,
Their hearts, Benevolence so often
stirred,
Their long descriptions of their bitter
trials,
Are quite beyond our counting—in a
word!

Yes! self! self! always *self!* what *they*
had borne,
The patient temper *they* had kept so
long—
Even when their bosoms had been cruelly
torn:
These sweet themes are the burdens of
the song!

YES! IT IS SOMETIMES LUDICROUS—

YES! it is sometimes ludicrous to see
The glowing admiration some evince
In their own virtuous lives, *such as they*
be!
I speak — resolving not the fact to
“mince”!

And that, in truth, may mean that poor,
mean share
Of our humanity, met in some places—
Only — that their perceptions seem so
slow,
One would not, as we do, laugh in their
faces!

One smiles—and sighs! to see the meagre
uses
To which man puts the time he dares
to call
His own—how proudly *struts*, if he in-
duces
Another's feet into *his* steps to fall!

He thinks no labours done are like his
own,
For ever of their value will he prate
As just the very greatest man hath known,
Whose benefits they *can't* exaggerate!

Regarding *your own* merits, we all
know,
They hold a strong and scarcely pleasant
view,—
You *may* perceive, if you are not too
slow,
You're of those dark realms wherein
all burns blue!

AN EXPERIENCE OF LIFE!

ONE sometimes meets with those upon
the plains
Of life—(and more than *sometimes*, much
I fear!)
Who spend their hours in pointing out the
stains
That seem to mark some “brother's”
sad career!*

Keenly that “brother's” follies he dis-
cerns!—
And something crafty in his simplest
ways—
He gives to *all* his actions *vicious* turns,
An evil meaning finds in every phrase.

Yet such, for their *own* footsteps, you
must know,
Will almost claim a holiness divine!
A sanctimonious air, a painted glow
O'er all and every act of *theirs* will
shine.

And all they touch hath afterwards a
taint,
A something that's unwholesome—sickly-
white

* According to the French it is “*toujours les autres*” who make the troubles of the world—a view to meet with the approbation of the philosophic Pharisee.

And mildew, that at first may seem but faint,
Will shortly even the purest lily blight.

And to the world they oft exaggerate
The faults, mistakes and follies of
"those others"—

They view their own mean footsteps as
more great
Than all the footsteps of their "feeble" brothers!

Our *friends* to our own credit may re-
dound—

And add a borrowed glory to our
name!—

Our *enemies*, we know, are often found
More keenly faults than virtues to pro-
claim!

THEY FLATTERED THEIR OWN SET—

THEY flattered their own "set," at the
expense

Of others—Oh! 'tis no uncommon case!
But this was done in darkness even
dense—

In ignorance of all others' deeds of
grace!

One shines by contrast in this world of
ours!

And they, in that small sphere that was
their own,
*Had but to measure with the smaller
powers,*

With those to whom all greatness was
unknown!

And each may figure as a "too—too—" *star*

Among the smaller twinklers of their
sky!

Nor seem to know that loftier natures are
On earth — unknown to "*their*
philosophy"!

Scorn every one of these! if it be man
Or woman—let them never clasp thy
hand—

For they may prove to you a very ban—
A very plague-spot on your meadow-
land.

They *may* assume that they are purer—
better

Than any of the common, vulgar
crowd!—

Yet *their* religion is as a "dead letter"—
A thing concealed beneath a loathsome
shroud!

THEY SAID IT WAS A WICKED WORLD!

THEY said it was a wicked world!—that
they,

Alone, walked in a safe and holy way.

They preached of little charity—for all
Who through the darkness of their days
should fall—

Who, fainting, lost all courage and all
powers

To battle with life's sterner, harder hours—

They said it was a wicked world—that
they

Alone, walked in a safe and holy way—

They *quite* thought one should succour
the distressed—

And help the heavy-laden and oppressed—
Yet, when the time came for that "faith"
to show

*Its "works," the case was different, don't
you know!*

They said it was a wicked world—that
they

Alone, walked in a safe and holy way.

They judged all others but themselves were
evil,

And had *some* secret compact with the
devil!—

Declared that all men sought some foolish
prize—

They, only, looked for it in Heaven's
own skies—

So said it was a wicked world—that they
Alone, walked in a safe and holy way!

They laughed at all that world's mean,
sordid cares—

But thought it hard if any laughed at
theirs!—

And so—blindfold they went upon their way;
A foolish, feeble race—can none gainsay.

Yet said it was a wicked world—that they
Alone, walked in a safe and holy way!

TO A TROUBLED SOUL.*

"NAY! show no want of faith in good,
because

There shall be much of evil on this
earth—

Nor disbelieve in God's unchanging laws
Because some devil turns them into
mirth!"

"Think you that I discredit a fresh rose,
A stainless lily — swear they never
graced

A world declared so darkened by its
woes—

Because *some* blossoms show but blight
and waste!"

"Think you that I in doves shall dis-
believe

Because each shall be troubled by a
Kite?

Shall we, because so many here needs
grieve,

Believe in no more sweetness—no more
light?"

"Think you for tender lambs I shall
despair,

Because the winds are northerly and
cold—

Because they need the shepherd's watchful
care

To keep the wolves from stealing from
the fold?"

"Think you I cannot trust a noble man,
Because I know of many that are vile?

Such arguments may be of *some* the plan—
From me, my friend, they but provoke
a smile!"

"No! show no want of faith in good,
because

There shall be much of evil on this
earth—

Nor disbelieve in God's unchanging laws,
Because some devil turns them into
mirth."

OH, FRIEND!—

OH! Friend—the fairest harvest we may
gather

Is often that which late in life we reap—
'Tis better far at this to labour—*rather!*—

Than to sit—smiling—on a *little* heap!—

Some are so lightly satisfied—and preach

As though—goodness knows why!—they
know far more

Than others!—and in this belief they
teach

A multitude—out of the *leanest* store!—

For they have plucked but such poor fruit
that grew

Within the reach of *very* feeble hands,
And little of more sun-ripe fruits they
knew,

That brightly covered even a neighbour's
lands.

Yes! fruits of others they but rarely
praised,

But evermore maintained that their
own fruit

Was finer than all fruit by others raised,
And better far rewarded our pursuit!

Were they simply content 'twere well!—
but they,

Made foolish by conceit, do proudly
swear

That all sour fruits grow in and near *our*
way

And that *their* fruits, alone, are sound
and fair!

A VERY ANCIENT TALE!—I.

ABOUT —.

UNDER a pharisaical disguise

A thousand petty feelings had their
play—

Veiled from the public's *comprehensive* eyes
In fond security they lived their day!

* Troubled by a cynic's "arguments!"—one literally made unhappy by the doctrine of the want of noble women and chivalrous men in our times!

For holy charity their world knew not,
 Her steps were neither on its breadth,
 nor length—
 And modesty avoided the *loud* spot
 Where vanity assumed the robe of
 strength!

The world thought them fanatic, it is
 true,
 Who saw that, under a false sunlight,
 spread
 The flowers that were unbathed in whole-
 some dew,
 Where healthy trees all foliage quickly
 shed.

But there were thoughtful eyes that looked
 behind
 That outer—fluttered robe, of *seeming*
 white,
 Who read the weakly, the conceited mind,
 The soul that only for dear self could
 fight!

Yes! saw Religion used but as a veil—
 Whose seeming purity dull souls would
 praise:
 Truly an ancient—*very* ancient tale,
 Whose echoes reach us from earth's
 farthest days!

A VERY ANCIENT TALE!—II.

ABOUT—.

IF he doth speak as man—loudly be-
 wailing
 The errors—frailties—of *other* men,
Be sure he doth it to conceal some failing,
 Hidden,—as hides a wolf within its
 den!

He thinks by wearing that said robe of
 white
 To thus conceal some *under* robe of
 sin!—
 And that men shall not know the leprous-
 blight
 Hath loathsomely spread o'er his un-
 clean skin!

And dost thou hear a woman, whose
 meek eyes
 Are piously uplifted to the skies,

Reproach her sisters for their faults, or
 crimes,
 And moan the vicious footsteps of the
 times—

Be sure 'tis done, that *others'* lips may say
 That “such are of the holy of their
 kind”!
 And that these truly march upon their
 way—
 Unlike all others — neither deaf nor
 blind!

Yes! through that sad experience you will
 gain
 A bitter knowledge others will endorse—
 And learn how many on this earth's broad
 plain
 Do run the Pharisee's detested course!

TO —.

IF thou would'st live an unmolested life,
 And have not *others'* troubles on thy
 years,
 Eschew all vexing wars and painful strife
 Be careless of thy brother's moans and
 tears!

Toil only for thyself—and struggle not
 To show, for paths of any, kindly feel-
 ing,
 To pause to smooth a sister's roughened
 lot,
 To brush the cobwebs from a pauper's
 ceiling—

Speak sadly of men's multitude of sins—
 But never seek to dry a mourner's
 tear!—

Proclaim it is the sinner often wins,
 In all the races run by mortals here!—

For thou in doing this may'st win much
 praise
 That thou hast lived so quietly thine
 hours—
 And troubled (and *helped!*) none upon
 thy ways,
 But shrank from all things that might
prove thy powers!

But otherwise will mud be freely thrown
 At all—at anything that is thine own

Thou wilt be called all that is vile and
foul,
And demons round thy very gate will
howl!

"THAT SET."

"I WOULD not wish 'that set' to meet
again"—

I said, one day — in speaking to a
friend—

"All hope of their 'improvement' is in
vain—

Self-righteousness 'endureth to the
end!'"

"Nothing can e'er convince them they are
not

Crème de la Crème—a picked and chosen
band!

They are, in truth, a *self-admiring lot*—
Once dwellers in a well-known, ancient
land!"

"If they know they are holier—they are
wiser

Than all the world—how *can* that world,
they say,

Act in the smallest part, as *their* adviser—
Direct what paths to choose upon *their*
way?"

"And shall the godly"—drivel they—"be
taught

By weak, ungodly spirits—surely *not*?

It is a vile and an insulting thought—

Ours is a 'pure' and a 'selected' lot!"

To know them—one has heard that they
have said—

Is like a "liberal education"—cant

Almost beyond belief!—again—a thread
Of an old woof—the seed of an old
plant!

TO —.

(IN ANSWER TO A LETTER.)

No! I care little for their blame, or
praise,

As far as it concerns myself, my friend—

They spoke ill of me from mine earliest
days—

And spite like theirs *will never reach its
end!*

And malice never moved me much from
any—

One needs must meet it in the world's
great crowd—

The foolish of this earth, they say, are
many,

The lies of spite—they also say, are
loud!

It *might* have moved mine anger, spoke
they well,

That is, in *commendation* of my paths—

For by such praise I could not fail to
tell

They thought me fitted for *their* homes
and hearths!

And they are not of those that value much
A life whose thoughts are all unlike
their own—

A worthless dream—and worse—to them is
such,

Whose joys and griefs are all to them
unknown.

Full little of the heart of man know they,
But feeble knowledge have they of his
brain—

And all the less—alas! that one must say—
Because of *self* so marvellously vain!

FOR OTHERS!

Aye! if I sometimes trouble to expose—

If but in some slight manner—my mean
foes—

And speak my utter scorn of them—'tis
never

That they can touch my life—or now, or
ever!

After a manner I am grateful!—they

Intensify the light upon my way—

Show me the stars that smile down from
above—

The strength—the glory—and the truth of
Love—

Of many faithful hearts I had not known

Save for the words and deeds of liars
and thieves!

Nor is this but a lesson of mine own,

But one that many a tried heart relieves.

The good and evil lie not far apart—
 The fiercest storms assault the calmest
 skies,—
 He who would purchase in the world's
 great mart
 Takes now a counterfeit and now a
 prize!

Aye! it is most *for others* that I speak
 With scorn, or light contempt, of cer-
 tain folks;
Now to "assure" the timid and the weak,
 And *now*—for the mere cracking of light
 jokes!

HAD I BUT FLATTERED!

HAD I but flattered!—not one single word
 Of malice, it is likely, had I heard!
 For some, as we have said, can hardly
live
 Without that 'incense' I could never give!

Not that I am a Puritan! for sweet,
 Fair gifts true Love on all her friends
 bestows—
 She walks with straight, but yet with
 fragrant feet,
 Her hands full of the lily and the rose.

But to *invent*—to *praise*, when to give
 praise
 Is dealing out the vilest *butter*—Ha!
 This *may* suit some mean and unpleasant
 ways,
 To me 'tis going just — yes! *just too*
far!

And so when I withheld it, many times,
 I knew what needs must follow—cold
 disgust!
 The sound as though of ill-tuned, jangling
 rhymes,
 And something in the air that smelt of—
 dust!

An east wind—blowing right across the
 plain!—
 Steps that seemed ever floundering in a
 bog—
 A plain, where hope of light and air was
 vain!
 To me the sun set, then, as in a fog!

TO —.

(IN ANSWER TO A LETTER.)

AND one would teach them, friend, would
 they be taught,
 That there are in this life, things greater
 far
 Than those that seem to trouble every
 thought
 Of theirs—either in times of peace, or
 war!

Methinks one might full many lessons
 teach
 Of the more noble strength of *others'*
 ways
 Than seem recurrent to the minds of each
 Of these poor souls, throughout their
 feeble days!

'Tis easy to do nothing, save to sit
 As judges upon others' work — and
 worth—
 To speak with sweetest sadness, or grim
 wit,
 Upon the many failures of this earth—

These, truly, *are* our "feeble" ones—and
 this
 Hath been and will be of such lives the
 close
 That men so little their small deeds shall
 miss
 As scarce to mark the hour when they
 repose!

Aye! and repose in silence!—who shall
 hang
 The garlands on *such* graves beneath the
 sun!—
 Or bid the trumpets peal, the bells to
 clang
 O'er any deeds that they on earth had
 done!

BLIND HUMAN NATURE.

TRULY is human nature strangely blind
 To its own faults—a fact almost appal-
 ling!
 Eager to note the blunders of its kind,
 And yet into the same too surely
 falling!

One heard, some years ago, a woman
warn

All whom she knew against a certain
blight—

Who spoke of Flattery with the utmost
scorn,

As of a thing to lead from truth and
light

Who said—and truly said—that nothing
worse

Could well infest on earth, a mortal's
road—

And that *who* lived beneath a flatterer's
curse

Was one who filled with serpents his
abode—

And vowed that to accomplish its own
ends

No vicious thing would Flattery not
achieve—

Weaving its snares to separate old friends,
Until would each and both its lies
believe.

And yet—alas! beneath that same vile
spell

That same poor woman slowly — surely
fell—

And went the way she deprecated. Lo!
What foolish things are done on plains
below!

THE LESSONS OF LIFE.

"The happiness of Life, it has been said, consists
in being well deceived."—*Times Leader*, Nov. 16th,
1883.

HA! is it so! How happy *some* must be
Who have by *friends* been cheated
through long years!—

A truth that still is somewhat hard to see,
Since it *may* reach us through the
"Vale of Tears."

So it is requisite, O Sage! that never
Our eyes be opened, but are sealed for
ever—

Thus live in a Fool's Paradise—no bliss
Being, it seems, so exquisite as this!

Alack! some day the very fabric rots,
That we have built around us—and we
steal

A look to see the foul decay that blots
Our fruit, and anything but thankful
feel!

Fret not! these lessons needs must come
to all—

To be deceived is but a common fate—
We hear the voices that will sometimes
call

And bid us stop — reflect! — and — *hear*
too late!

One maggot taints the freshest, sweetest
meat,

Good wine is soured by an unwholesome
tub—

Though when 'twas tasted—early—it was
sweet—

And — as our Shakespere tells us —
"*There's the rub.*"

THE LESSONS OF LIFE.

ANOTHER VIEW OF

EXPERIENTIA DOCET.

Experientia docet—many preach!—

And wisely so—of that one has no
doubt—

Truthful and strong the lessons she can
teach,

That often only death's own hand rubs out!

Not like the lesson written on a slate,

That any hand may easily efface—

Her lessons—come they early—come they
late,

Will leave upon thy life their lasting
trace!

Far better somewhat early they are learnt—

Though lessons that the dunce ne'er
understands;

Later—our fingers bitterly are burnt

In taking *that* hot bread into our hands!

Lessons whose value must remain untold,—

Lessons that have instructed even the
brute—

Lessons more precious than are gems, or
gold!

Still—there remains one fact can *none*
dispute!

The dunce, alone, no wisdom e'er is
taught—

A wooden case encloses his dull breast—

Not even by keen pain is wisdom bought,
Of "Greater Life" he shall in ignorance
rest!

Let us, then, do our best—seek not to
swell

What seems already far too huge a
class!—

Life's lessons may be hard, yet it is well
To prize them, while along her roads
we pass.

LOOKING FORWARD!

(A BIOGRAPHY IN VIEW!)*

SHE had, we fear, but little of the heaven
Of true humility—she rather said
Instead of prayers of penitence to
Heaven—

"Grant! that they praise me to the
world when dead.

"Shall I not wear *some* wreath of after
Fame—

Placed on my brow by *one whom I have
served?*

Shall she not proudly glorify my name,
And men admit the glory well deserved!

"Will they not say—'There—from the
busy crowd

Remote—once dwelt a woman of "pure"
mind—

A woman of whose memory to be proud—
A woman all unselfish—and—*refined!*

"One who at all times could forget her-
self

For others, for the suffering and the
weak—

Indifferent to all show—all vulgar pelf,
Beyond all others modest! patient!!
meek'!!!

"For *one* will praise me—well I know,
whose praise

Of *all* my virtues shall be ripe and
strong—

For I have flattered her *these many days*,
And loudly said all paths but hers were
wrong!

"If Charity be to my lips unknown
For those whose views are not *my* views
and aims,
Am I not right to think most of mine own,
Those others are but strangers—*not my
friends!*"

"All that is sweet shall she—my friend—
detail,
Nor shall there seem aught other pure as
I—

And she shall hide all things that seem to
fail,

As spots of darkness in a bright, blue
sky!

"And she shall all my deeds of virtue
double

And multiply — *through faithful ser-
vice*—when

I pass away from this sad world of
trouble—

A ray of glory in the eyes of men!

"The records of paid duties she shall
keep,

As both the best of wives and best of
mothers,

Ha!! in this hope I well may sleep the
sleep

Of all the righteous—*sleep unknown to
others!*"

LIVE—TO ENJOY!—

("AND SO—AND SO—AND SO"—.)

"It gratified me to hear them clap their hands, so
that I could hear them. . . . In London they put
kid gloves together faintly . . . to-night it was
vigorous—so—and so—and so—that's what an actor
wants. And Mr. Irving clapped his hands until the
echoes of his own applause could be heard as far up
as the flies."—Quoted in the *Times*, Oct. 31st, 1883,
from the *World*, Philadelphia, Oct. 30th.

AND yet — it may be — there exists a
cause—

Though one for actors—authors—hard,
alike,

To comprehend!—*meanings* in faint ap-
plause,

That might, *sometimes*, their understand-
ings strike!

* Said Biography to be written by an obliged and grateful "timeserver"!

Do actors with our authors then agree
And think the "feebleness" complained
of, means
Want of that proper praise, that *might*,
you see,
Or *should* have been—worked up behind
the scenes!

This popular applause!—one doubts it
greatly,
Fashion, or fancy! spite, or friendship!
any
Of these—but 'tis no use to speak irately
Of what is the reward, nay, *greed* of
many!

Alas! this "so—and so" will die away—
Applauded to the echo though it be—
One wise soul's critique will for ever
weigh
Against such flattery—seemeth it to me!

Yes! all these ringing echoes surely pass
Away—a heavy silence may succeed!—
A lesson not digested by the Ass,
But surely one that Wisdom's eyes may
read!

TO —.

Look not upon *thyself* with such fond
eyes!

Nor be so sure thy "self-love" hath such
cause!

Thou may'st have yet to learn, with sore
surprise,

Even in thy *favourite* mirror there are
flaws!

'Tis a good face, thou thinkest! *perhaps*
not fair

As some poor, silly dolls of white and
pink—

But see! what feeling, oh! what *power* is
there!

A mouth to utter and a brow to think!

'Tis not the low, broad brow the poets
sing,

Whose powers to charm us they have
often taught—

But—one that speaks of *mind*—a *better*
thing,

One full of spirit, brimming o'er with
—*thought*!

A *weak* mouth, some declare it, in their
spite!

Besides—expression speaketh from the
eyes—

Especially if they be grey—and *light*—

Such as we know belong to souls most
wise!

Ah! every day of life one is reminded

Man is an ass, in vanity! So be it!

The eyes that view his own dear "phiz"
are blinded,

He sees its beauty as none others see it!

Yet—*now* one of a *woman's* features
thought—

(Of course it could not be, my friend,
of *thine*!)

Who, by her "idiotic" friends was taught

To think her poor, plain features were
"divine!"

NOTE.—Fact! A *very* plain woman was once
persuaded by some *idiotic* friends, that her face
resembled a certain well-known fancy portrait of—
Christ!

FACES.

SHE had to us, a most uncomely face—

For something seemed to spoil the
mouth and eyes

The forehead, too, lacked intellectual
grace,

And yet—one saw it thought itself—*all*
wise!

Yes! on that most unhandsome brow there
sat

An air of quite ineffable conceit—

And something oft reminded of a cat,

In the slow movement of the broad, flat
feet.

Her voice—yes! it was low—and voices
low

Have always an advantage—but—not
sweet!

And much of vanity, as we all know,
In even the *pitch* of voices one may meet.

Think not one may a countenance dislike
Because it simply fails in comely lines—
Because it has no feature that shall *strike*
The eye with that sweet beauty that refines—

For of the faces I on earth have met
One of the dearest, memory could retain,
Whose patient calmness I shall ne'er forget,
Was one the *dull* might have esteemed as—*plain!*

PITCH—NOT SNOW!

BELIEVING that her wisdom far surpassed
All others' wisdom, little would she learn—
She deemed, indeed, her knowledge was so vast
Her road could never take an evil turn!

Therefore it angered her, beyond all measure,
To have it shown *that* road led not to light—
That she had better spend *some* hours of leisure
In pulling up its many plants of blight—

"What! do you think *you* better know than I,
In what this chosen road of mine shall end?
That *you* can read the lessons of the sky—
And warn not as an enemy, but friend!

"Or—if not as a foe, as one but blind
To all the lessons of *this* life, that *we*
Have learnt, while you were lagging far behind,
To taste the fruits upon Life's evil tree!"

Friends! not through any poor desire to preach
The lesson we have learnt we here would teach—

Think not the surface *all* that we need learn—
Under the flowers volcanic *rivers* burn!

WHY IS IT?

Why is it that biographies, of small
And common sorts, so try us in these days?
Why won't they let small doings gently fall
From light — not dragged before the public gaze?

Because they pander to small vanities,
Make people live their lives for future praise—
Pretend in all things to be sweetly wise—
Pretend to walk in such pure, holy ways!

Because—not from a noble soul they act
The left hand knoweth well of what the right
Shall do! — and that is — all that may attract
That World, which, *though* contemned,
is still their Light!

Because small opportunities they give
To all the lesser fry of hangers-on,
To show "indifferent reasons" why they live
Upon the earth, nor noble garments don—

Because they calm much disappointed pride,
And soothe their sorry Failures — who have made
No mark upon their period — near, or wide—
Whose candle-light lights not the palest shade!

EACH IDOL HAS ITS WORSHIPPER.

EACH idol has its worshipper, you see—
And those who laugh thereat are viewed with eyes
Of fear, or malice, as the case may be,
According to their "pungency," or size!

And Mrs. So-and-So, has some pet friend,
Who flatters her for reasons of her
own—*

To serve, it seems, some *quite* especial
end

*An end to all the outer world
unknown!—*

And Mr. So-and-So must have *his* share,
The Flatterer shall of him make some
wise use!

All seem to like the same o'er luscious
fare,

And don't believe—like gourmands—in
abuse!

These "worshippers" in sundry ways are
paid—

It might be just impossible to paint
The *colour* of the "coins," *but* it is *said*—
These have, of the "Old Gentleman,"
a taint!

Truly are those that cannot *live*—without
The help of either flatterer, or fool—
And, as in the old Roman times, no
doubt,
The flattered, *to* the flatterer is—a Fool!

HINTS FROM ANOTHER

"ANCIENT!"

"A great man is not always wise, . . . and
the aged do not always understand wisdom."—ELIHU.

WISDOM—though she be loudly called—
comes not,

Of a necessity, to ripe old age!
It falleth not to every "old one's" lot
To turn o'er, in late years, a nobler
page!

By no means is so rare the wise young
head,
And foolish old one, one both hopes
and fears!—

And Wisdom's light less on grey heads is
shed

Than on the "understanding" of all
years!

What is *one's* poison is *another's* meat,
"Eyes and no eyes" † again a hint con-
veys—

One wisely guards his steady, thoughtful
feet,

Another *blindly* walks the self-same
ways.

Wisdom oft much experience hath, and
knows

That there are some whom she can
never teach—

That grey heads *may* be even her greatest
foes,

Stupid as oysters on an old sea-beach!

To make that good dish "*Wisdom*"—to
speak plain

And homely language — needs much
thoughtful "mixings"

Of good ingredients — needing now a
"*strain,*"

And now, what our Americans call—
"*fixings!*"

CERTAIN WRITERS—OF BIOGRAPHIES!

OF eyes of judgment there appear but
few—

Of "what's within" they have the poorest
view—

In truth do many strangely little know
What *part* of that "within" their owners
show!

By some is only seen the bitter side—
The poor ambition and the mis-placed
pride—

The vanity that in each glance may glow—
Hypocrisy—that veils the sins below!

One who can others flatter, with glib
tongue,

*May have her praises by the flattered
sung!*—

So one oft hears a *crowd* of skilful lies—
Though even *such* not long deceive the
wise!

* And promises that she will write—her biography! See p. 502.

† See "Evenings at Home," by Mrs. Barbauld.

Yet not lies by the "grateful writer"
thought!—
By his, or her own weakness shrewdly
caught—
In what they write they *sometimes* quite
believe—
All know how Flattery can the *weak*
deceive!

Had they but learnt the truth that once
—of old—
Was written,* other tales had then been
told!
But nothing, we have learnt, will breed
such spite,
As daring to show things in *their true*
light!

SIMILES.

(APPLICABLE TO CERTAIN LIVES!)

THEIR fruits were all unwholesome, pale
and sour—
The leaves were eaten up by worms and
blight—
They needed a refreshing, sparkling
shower—
They needed sweetness and they needed
Light!

Their peaches grew upon a northern wall—
Their strawberries spread o'er an ill-
kept plain—
Their apples withered, long before the
"fall"—
They wanted warmth, and light, refresh-
ing rain—

So was it with their minds—they called
for room!
Required a broader space and fresher
air—
Like winter flowers they wanted hue and
bloom,
And needed broader culture, wiser care.

Yes! like the fruits—discoloured, withered
—brown—
Neither in taste, nor yet in fragrance
sweet—

One stronger breath of air, and they fell
down,
Lost in the very grass beneath our feet!

Truly to make a fair and wholesome
growth
They needed healthful winds—at eve
and morn,
And summer's dews;—seeing they wanted
both
No wonder that the world passed by in
scorn!

ODD, INDEED!

'Tis sometimes odd indeed when one
discovers
Who is it stands up in the world to
teach!—
Advises all of earth about their lovers,
And of all things most near and sacred
preach!

There is no holy thing they will not
touch,
Some *stupid* creed of their own to pro-
claim—
Though others toil and think and suffer
much
Their rights seem never, to such minds,
the *same*—

All modesty looks foolish to those eyes,—
And *why* one knows not, yet will they
maintain
That they alone are strong — trustworthy
—wise—
And all the rest but ignorant and vain!

They *may* be even untaught—timid—slow
To give their help in times of war, and
still
There's nothing in the world they do not
know!
Or might not even *perform*, had they
their will!

They tell us how to act and how to speak,
Hold that *their* principles, alone, are
pure—

Assert, with an unblushing brow and
cheek,
No sins, that *others* tempt, *their* souls
allure!

CERTAIN "RELIGIOUS"

SOULS!

THEY who in comfort and in peace may
dwell,
By grinding toil, or dangers, un-
oppressed,
Will of their pure, or saintly pathways,
tell,
And yet while others labour they—but
rest!

Cowards!—who dare not fight, because
they fear
Lest they to danger's brink may draw too
near!

Whose only claim to virtue is, that they
Take care to keep well out of peril's way!

And what is strong and true religion
worth,
If, keeping ever safely out of sight,
If dwelling in the calmer spots of earth,
*It leaves "the rest" to fight all needful
fight?*

Yet some maintain themselves the holier,
far,
That they do keep their hands so white
and clean—

That they will surely shirk all strife and
war,
And dwell in peaceful fields and pas-
tures green!

Maintaining war is sinful, they will keep
Away from life's too rugged thorough-
fare,
Safe in their folds as are the timid sheep—
Leaving the shepherds for the wolves
to tear!

THY CHOSEN WORK!

TO THE SELFISH.

THY chosen work—one easy at all times,
And one thou followest with "*too much*"
zest,

Is — pointing out thy fellow-creatures'
crimes,
While boasting thine is an unspotted
breast!

If thou would'st sacrifice—as some have
done,
Thyself—to show what souls may here
achieve—

If thou *thyself* a noble race would'st run
Thy tenderness for earth might earth
believe!

See if thou can'st not do some stalwart
deed,
Nor for the world's, nor for a "friend's"
applause—

Show that for others' welfare thou can'st
bleed,
Thyself forgetting—in a brother's cause!

O! fool—*by those on whom thou hast
heaped scorn*

Are deeds of sacrifice done every day!
Go to! thou on a luckless day wert born,
And would'st do well to tread a silent
way!

Of such as thou the world will ne'er be
proud—
Thou wilt sleep in a tomb marked by no
tears—

One, it may be, of but too large a crowd,
Though one, we pray, to lessen with
earth's years!

SOME OF THIS EARTH—

AYE, some of earth, whom one may yet
despise,

Are those who would for evermore be
"Teaching!"

One longs to bid them take from their
own eyes

The mote—ere to the world their wisdom
preaching.

Teaching—is not a thing that one would
mock at!

Yet we would put *one* question — to
begin!—

How is it that they never seem to knock at
Their *own* door first—and question—
Who's within?

The doors to their own souls are often
locked—
And when admittance thereunto be
sought
It will be found the precincts are o'er-
stocked
With strangest rubbish, to its corners
brought!

What flowers there are, are choked, from
want of air—
There's no room for the "culture" of
that soul!
And one might search that rubbish with
despair,
Nor find one wholesome plant amongst
the whole!

How often one has wished they would
but spend,
In making their own premises more
sweet,
The labour given to a—sometime—friend!
And scrape, instead of his, their *own*
soiled feet!

THEIR BOAST!

THEY boast of working for the loftiest
goal,
They speak as sure of Heavenly
reward,—
What is on the Recording Angel's scroll
Is known, however, only to the Lord!

That doth not seem to strike them—they
will speak
As though for *such as they* shone God's
high throne!—
For they have much of what has been
called "*cheek*,"
In common *parlance*—as some may have
known!

They have the *sweetest* insight, don't you
see!
Into all Heavenly rules—all Heavenly
ways—
And of how dark all others' fates must
be,
Compared with their own glory—"Give
Heaven praise!"

For 'tis surprising—nay! even more,
Astounding I should call it!—to per-
ceive
How those whose virtues show the smallest
store,
In their "outshining glory" can be-
lieve!

They speak of Heaven—and of God's rules
and laws
With certainty unknown in *man's* affairs!
And intimate it is—*quite right*! because
The Knowledge of the *Christian* soul
is theirs!

TO CERTAIN COMPLAINING WOMEN.

Now—you poor creatures of the "feebler
sex"—
Who seem to almost live on earth to vex
The souls of all your fellow creatures
here
By a complaining, frivolous career,
And who your little powers are always
straining
To do the work of scolding and complain-
ing—

See if there is on earth, no "work to
do!"
That work,—not *only* cleansing your own
shoe,
But visiting the dwellings of the sick,
Where foul disease, close air and fog are
thick—
And blot out, save from Charity's sweet
eyes,
Their very dwellings from all wholesome
skies!

Ye, who in comfort live within your
homes—
Where trial or poverty but rarely comes—
Ye who have shelter—who have warmth
and food—
Find it no doubt, quite easy to be
good!!
But there's a place whose floors shall
ever shine
That they are polished by such feet as
thine!

For this complaining is, a well-known thing,
That is to some a very pleasant one!—
Accompanied — 'tis whispered — with a sting
For some—unloved—what time the work is done!—
Meantime you dream that everyone *must* feel
You were, throughout—stirred by some—
holy zeal!

PLENTY OF THEM!

THOUSANDS upon the earth are still of these—
The old types of the hateful Pharisees,
Who so deceive themselves they really think
They — only — stand not on Perdition's brink!

Man! know thyself! again no easy task!
Impossible at times, indeed it proves—
No harder duty could you ever ask
At hands of his—or *one that he less loves!*

Truly so much he spends of that good time
In watching what his brothers' steps may be—
In reckoning up *their* folly, weakness, crime—
That little *needs* be left for self—you see!

That cannot surely matter—he reflects—
There is no evil shadow on *his* road!
So is it scarcely needful he corrects
His ways—all will be sweet in *his* abode!

These vain ones really seem to feel *quite* certain
Heaven is but veiled from them by passing mists;
But Death for them in time shall draw the curtain—
Not when *they* will—but simply *when he lists!*

A NEGLECTED DUTY.*

O DUTY! Duty! a strange scapegoat thou!
Such shabby weights are on thy shoulders laid—
Such varied lines are written on thy brow,
And something *queer* thy acts have oft betrayed!

Those acts, methinks, are just too loudly boasted
When they consist in giving *others* pain—
And oh! thy "health" hath been so often toasted,
Sweet Duty!—as to almost make thee *vain!*

Hast thou, O prating spirit! ne'er reflected,
When giving to thy sisters all thy time,
Thou hast, meanwhile *thyself* so much neglected
That even a fault might grow into a crime!

Thou art so busy—and so *very* wise
In pointing out another's wrong, or loss,
The notes that seem to blind thy fellows' eyes—
The quagmire which his foolish footsteps cross.

Yes! therefore thou, *unselfish* one, hast kept
But little time on thine own sins to spend,
To root up weeds that o'er *thy* paths have crept—
And thine own evil footsteps to amend!

MEAN SOULS!

MEAN souls!—who can't agree, one with the other—
They'll quarrel with a stranger, *or* — a brother!
Mean souls! who live as in a constant draught—
Their minds full of small woes and petty craft!

* We are in doubt at this moment whether Duty is a feminine or masculine spirit! — a point some might think open to much discussion!

Restless!—because their brains can never hold

Great, strong ideas—nor carry into force
An action that is daring—new and bold—
And see that it shall freely take its course!

Their lives are “neuter”—“passive”—
nothing more—

To “strike out” is beyond them—they
need arms
Of nobler power, for they have needless store

Of little ones — causing but small alarms! !

Strength—strength is what they need—an active life—

Something to clear the fogs that veil their plains—

Not that o’er dread of *anything* like strife,
Of aught involving “penalties and pains!”

The mind grows weary and the heart grows cold—

Attaining never to a noble prime—
Mildew—degeneration—dust and mould,
Grow o’er such fruitless souls, in course of time!

TO THE NARROW-MINDED.

BUT *do* you *really* think yourself so wise!
Sometimes I own that I can scarce believe it!

It seems a quite “too-too” of mysteries!
So, in the darkness, I, methinks, must leave it!

Yet—wiser than this world of mighty size,
Of wealth—of all varieties of creatures!
And is there *nothing* ever meets thine eyes

That in the *least* compares with thine own features!

What! and so much more virtuous —
“*pure*,” as well?

Than are all others of this earthly land—
And—*what else* can’st thou of thy goodness tell,

At least that *our* dull brains may understand!

What! so much better taught, in all thy ways,

Looking so cleverly to means and ends—
So well deserving all the petty praise
Lavished upon thee, by admiring friends!—

Oh! looking through the outside “veil” of kindness

So often torn—I can declare I know
That there is *nothing* that can match the blindness

In which *some* mortals pass their lives below!

TO—SOMEBODY! OR— SOMEBODIES!

SEARCH into thine own heart—reveal its meanness—

Bring out each little folly from its store—

Review each fault, or sin, with all the keenness

Given to thy sister’s weaknesses before!

Review them all—yes!—*all* thou may’st possess—

And don’t let them neglected longer be!
Yield them thy full attention—nothing less,
They’re worthy of the trouble — “you must see!”

Reflect! — is there not just *one* foible hidden

Amongst a *world* of “good things,” down below?

One that is not so vigorously chidden
As if it were a *brother’s* — don’t you know!”

That dainty little—*vice*, the world might term it!

To you seems a “pet weakness”—*but* a weakness!

It lives within your soul like a — “crab hermit!”

A failing—that you think of with much meekness!

Ah! !—had you in your sister’s heart but seen it

You had esteemed that heart a poor, mean thing,

And even "directly-minit" * set to clean it,
Leaving behind *only* a—hornet's sting!

THE LESSON OF EXPERIENCE.

If you should walk into a circle—not—
Not *quite*, as one might say, your "very own,"

If it should ever be your troubled lot
To find, instead of wheaten cake, a *stone*—

I would advise you *not* your teeth to try
With any fancy that it might be *bread*!
But put it—*certainly* to put it by,
For an inspection even might prove it *lead*.

Somewhat is life too short for all these trials,
This spoiling of one's teeth by ever tasting—

If o'er your head hath once been poured the vial
Of certain people's wrath, avoid—*more* basting!

Once men are poisoned by an evil smell
They do not near its precincts pass again—

At least those who have done so, grimly tell,
But of renewal of a griping pain!

Sweet springs there are in life, of that be sure

Again, good bread that shall not prove a stone—

And waters that are beautiful and pure—
'Tis therefore well to leave *the rest*—alone!

TO A MELANCHOLY SORT OF SOUL.

You — who have made our mirror but reflect,

By some dark magic, foul and loathsome spots,

Who eyes of scrutiny will but direct
To see on Life's broad page the devil's blots—

Pass o'er the many evils thou see'st there,
That thou hast traced to fruits of *others'* growing;
See, rather, nothing bitter and unfair
Hath sprung up that is of thine *own* mad sowing!

There is the growth of envy and of spite—
There are fair vessels wrecked on rock-strewn shores—

There flowers, that withered with an eastern blight—
And fruits with maggots breeding in their cores—

Shall not that mirror faithfully give back
The many things that *thou* hast reared of wrong—

The slanders thou hast sown upon yon track,
Whose roots are now so scattered and so strong—

Oh! steps that strain to reach but unsweet goals—

Oh! blindness of the eyes of mad conceit!—

Oh! the uncleanness of some bitter souls!—

The ever foolish, reckless — vagrant feet!

A CHOICE!

Of old maids married—old maids single, I
By far prefer the *last*—for they have less
Of that strange vanity you shall espy
In one who — *late* — a husband shall possess!

Our old maids married will assume to know

Far more than the *long* married wives!
although

They really nothing know of "Love's young dream"—

"Love" dyes his grey hairs—they but auburn *seem*!

'Tis strangely droll to note the bashful air

That often marks "alliances" like theirs—

* Once an expression of the admirable Mrs. Gamp!

Yet will they prate about it everywhere—
Assuming to know *all* young Love's
affairs!

"A Little Knowledge is a dangerous
thing"!

'Tis like the reading, but of partial
news!

And children who too late have learned to
swing

Are certain of a fall, a break, or bruise!

Too late in life Love's race men cannot
run,

And *women less*—they're certain of a
fall—

I hope I don't offend, good people—none
Need be offended—for I speak of *all*!

A WELL-KNOWN MODEST SOUL!

(Air—"And *it* was always partial to *confessing*!")

YES! *it* was always *partial* to "*confess-
ing*"—

As though such modesty might prove a
blessing!—

Of small *instructions*, such as—"My good
girl—

I must confess — I do not like *that
curl!*"

"Yes! I *confess*—I like things *very* plain,
(Aside. As *fools* say I am!) Beauty
makes us *vain*—

A silly and unnecessary thing,
To whose vain shadow 'idiot' man *will
cling!*"

"*This* is the way I like things done, you
know—

Neither be you too quick, nor yet too
slow—

Put *this* thing in one place, and *that* in
that—

Place *this* upright and lay the other *flat!*

"Yes! I *resemble Christ*—my kind friends
say!

I mean that portrait of Him that they
frame!

Not that I am accustomed much to *pray*—
That is for sinners—I know nought of
shame!"

"You call this Blasphemy! but I don't
see it!

What blasphemy is there in *truth*—I
pray?

But if you *choose* to call it so—so be it!
It can be nothing to me what *you* say!"

"Others—besides me, such opinions hold—
With brains of noble weight and lofty
forces—

You are Conservative—and Church—I'm
told,

Old-fashioned views that no one *wise*
endorses!"

"Again—I nothing know of wrong and
sin,

My paths in life may any one inspect!

Indeed I doubt not Heaven is mine to
win—

Truly I *know* I—am of the 'Elect!' "

For mean and feeble things return, at
times,

To Memory, as well as darkest crimes—
Small things of ridicule — pin-pricks of
pain

Re-vivify—without our wish, again!

Echoes of a conversation once heard!

ECHOES—HEARD OF A PROPER AND GOODLY CAROL!

(ONE OF A CLASS!)

WE'RE so "pure-minded"—who so good
as we!

We can't *help* being happy, don't you see!
Although the world be filled with pirate
bands—

And sorrow's cry comes forth from many
lands.

The sun of joy on many shores has set—
In warfare—famine—misery; and yet

"Be ever joyful!" 'tis an old-world cry,—
The fools are disobedient, who sigh!

So tramp ye merrily upon your way—

"Sufficient is the evil of the day!"—

"Blessed are ye that mourn" is a mis-
take!

He is a fool whose heart on earth shall
break!

He is not wise who grieves for others' sake—

Ye happy-minded—let us march along!
Through smooth and sunny tracks our way we take,
Uplifting, evermore, a “cheerful” song!*

The world is full of suffering, sorrow — sin—

Of foolish rashness and of misused powers—
We who are *sure* the grace of Heaven to win
Should let a glad and grateful song be ours!

We're so “pure-minded”—who so good as we!

We can't *help* being happy, don't you see!
Although the world be filled with pirate bands—

And sorrow's cry comes forth from many lands!

THIS BEING SO—.

THIS being so, they think, shall make that light

And—“cheerful-mindedness” a thing to praise!—

As coming from a soul that knows no blight,

Because its ways are always *righteous* ways!

Such have no sins concerning which to trouble,

Nor feel those pangs of conscience, which,—some tell,

Can all the pains of one's existence double,

And make one feel, too soon—the pangs of hell!

The “cheerful,” *surely*, can no faults possess!

Know nothing of the “glaring eyes” of crime!—

'Tis but ill-doing that needs bring distress—

Sooner, or later, in *some* path of time!

It is that consciousness of *doing wrong*,
You see, that makes the misery — *of all!*—

Even throws its shadow o'er the brave and strong—

Even the most reckless spirit shall appal!

To sorrow for another—ah! what folly!
Grief is but well-earned punishment for sin!

How *can we* pass one hour of melancholy,
Knowing — that WE both joy and Heaven shall win!

AND YET—A PUZZLE!

NOT so “pure-minded”—they—as not to make

Their favourite walk bring them into foul places—

Not so “pure-minded” but they seem to take

A view of human nature that disgraces—

Not so “pure-minded” as to keep their eyes

Away from things that shock the strongest mind,

That yet calls *charity* to help the wise—
That charity that waits not on the blind!

Not so “pure-minded” as to love to tread
In clean and holy paths—*there* gather flowers

Fitted to crown a saint's meek, modest head—

And *that still flourish*, in our earthly bowers!

Not so “pure-minded” as to keep away
From each such view that only here degrades—

Yet, seeing not, would check the claim that they

Put forth, of knowing Life's more evil shades.

Not so “pure-minded” as to ever seek
For cleanliness, not dirt, upon earth's plains—

* Like Mr. Pecksniff in “Martin Chuzzlewit”—whose prototype one but too often meets about the world!

Not so "pure-minded"—*quite*—as peevish
—weak,
Of boastful souls and of the smallest
brains!

THE HOLY CLASS!

Yes! would you hypocrites and cowards
meet—

Would you know unclean hands and un-
washed feet—

Would you look into pale, unfaithful
eyes—

Would you know mouths of hate and lips
of lies—

Then join those who for "special
Christians" pass—

The "keep-apart"—the "pure," the
"holy" class!

Would you, as friends, have boastful,
loud-voiced friends,

People who serve you but for their *own*
ends,

Who "love you dearly" in life's brighter
days,

Then—only seek to share your thoughts
and ways—

Oh! join those who for "special
Christians" pass—

The "keep-apart"—the "pure," the
"holy" class.

Would you know those whom you could
never trust,

Whose hearts are *caked*, by even the
thickest crust

Of vile self-righteousness—*that* class whose
pride

In trouble's hours all former vows
denied?—

Then join those who for "special
Christians" pass—

The "keep-apart"—the "pure," the
"holy" class!

Would you the warmth of all your heart
bestow

On the most hateful worms that crawl
below,

Would you your best affections surely
waste,

Have your most free and loving faith dis-
graced—

Then join those who 'for "special
Christians" pass—
The "keep-apart"—the "pure," the
"holy" class!

LESSONS OF LIFE! LEARNT

OF SOME!

It was a "way they had!"—your heart
to stab,

Then turn the weapon round and round
again!

In work like this each seemed a very
dab—

None *could* be better skilled in giving
pain!

This was a joy that but belonged to
them!—

Had been theirs always, as by special
right—

What they had prized as though a noble
gem,

A gem that others *spurious* called, from
spite!!

What object *could* they have, one heard
them say,

Save to do good!—at best a thankless
task!

Except from "noblest motives" *why*
should they

So occupy their daily hours — they
ask?

'Tis a disease — a rank, fast-spreading
one—

Yes! a disease, no doubt, if not a
craze,

*To thus assume a clean, sweet race to
run,*

By throwing mud upon all others' ways!

Some really seem to think that throwing
dirt

Will make *their* dwelling have the
cleaner floor!

They see not 'tis themselves they chiefly
hurt—

And stain with stains remaining ever-
more!

AGAIN—THE “WAY” OF
SOME.

I DO not know, because a soul shall keep
Away from all the troubles of this
earth—
Hedged in by hurdles, like our silly sheep,
He needs boast of his purity — or
worth!—

And yet the “way” of some whom I have
met!

They boast their hands are clean—un-
stained—but why

Do they *suffering humanity forget*
So utterly, beneath this earthly sky!

And startled by the faintest note of war,
Although but waged for maintenance of
rights,

They choose some quiet spot and rest afar
From all their fellows’ turmoils—woes
and fights—

A coward’s creed!—good truth, I know no
term

So suited to the case—and to one’s
mind—

And one might fancy, even, that a worm
Would fight for its own race—*after* its
kind!

Ah! we grow wiser as the years go by!—
And view with comprehension’s thought-
ful eye

That sheep—that veils its cowardice with
meekness—

That boaster — who by boasts conceals
his weakness!

THE “SCANDALMONGER”

(AND HER FRIENDS).

I SOMETIMES think, and yet may wrongly
think,

That ye can scarcely on the past look
back,

And that sweet cup of satisfaction drink,
So dear to travellers on this earthly
track!

Think of the scandals spread by you—the
lies

Of every colour that to you were traced,
The hideous structures—fabrics of all size,
Whose building have so long your paths
disgraced.

Think of the calumnies your lips have
spoken,

With reckless disregard of truth and
right—

The many tender links your hands have
broken,

With all a scandalmonger’s hardened
spite.

No!—no great crown of pleasure, one
suspects,

Shall crown the treaders of a road like
this—

And thou and thine, whom Malice here
directs,

Hath at the journey’s end small meed of
bliss!

One cannot *quite* probe souls of this mean
class—

But one detests them quite beyond all
telling!

Yet they would fain for — yes! for
Christians pass,

Even when of “brimstone” their abodes
are smelling!

Well! well! the world is a mad world—
we know!—

There shall be some, we trust, that
Heaven shall reach—

Still—many choose the roads that lead
below—

Despite all lessons that our wise ones
teach!

A WELL-KNOWN CLASS!

“A Day Class in the Art of Never Remembering
Anything, and for a cure of Inconvenient Recollection.”
—Lectures by Professor Loseit. (See *Punch*, March
21st, 1885.)

THIS is a class one hath too often met,
A class that’s *fairly* numerous, we
deem!

Their own bad actions quickly they for-
get,

And hope *you* may regard them as a
dream!

Yes! you had dreamt them—glibly they explain—

Fancies are these — no more, as you must know—

And so to be dismissed from thought again,

Things just as *lumber*, in “back-rooms” to stow!

“Such ‘inconvenient’ memories should be cured—

Rubbish—we say—to bury out of sight—

’Tis really quite *too* much to be endured

That any seek to drag them back to light!”

“Yes! you should quite forget the past, and now

That storms are o’er, our friendship should be yours!

So smooth the frown from that unchristian brow,

And open wide your most unchristian doors!

“You should remember nothing on this earth

Except what to our credit may redound!

All deeds that we have done of evil worth

Ought to be buried deep below the ground!

“And we will promise never more to lie, So long as there is sunlight in your sky!—

But if we feel again the north winds blow

Conditions *all* must alter — you must know!”

PUNISH YOUR LIARS!

“Punish your liars [says *Truth*] . . . Show them no mercy.”—*Punch*, Dec. 6th, 1884.

Go to the moon!—the Sage *might* say— but *how*!

Give me but wings and I will forthwith fly!

My Liars I’d punish gladly, even now—

Teach me the way, and only let me try!

Show them no mercy? Aye! for they deserve none—

They showed no mercy, truly — only spite—

Had I a whip, or anything to serve one,
With manly strength—I’d flog them with delight!

Punish your liars?—advice both sharp and *pat*—

And falling in with every wish of mine!—

Again, but how to do it—tell me *that*!

To *only* give advice is very—*fine*!

A Liar oft is slippery as an eel—

Knows when and how to steal out of your way—

Nor sorrow nor repentance shall he feel—

He hath not learnt what conscience is— they say!

You *think* you’ve scotched your Adder?
No such thing!

He knows well when to have you in his power—

Then shall return to give his deadliest sting,

One you may suffer from till Life’s last hour!

USELESS “KICKING AGAINST THE PRICKS.”

“I cannot submit to be misrepresented as well as ill-used.”—J. H. WEEKS.

(See *Times*, Sept. 22nd, 1885.)

YET—is it worth while “kicking against pricks!”

Oh! have not thousands done this thing before?

To knock our angry forehead against bricks,

That were “midsummer madness,” if no more!

Have many no experience of this set?

Doth it belong not to the human race—

Is’t anything about which one need fret,

Or cause one frown to gather on the face?

To be misrepresented is the fate,

Hath been the fate, of all who walk in ways

That may than others be more bold, or straight—

Through all the weary count of human days.

And *we* have had it done to *us* more times
 Than we the reckoning of should care
 to keep!
 'Tis a collection of poor Envy's crimes,
 O'er which 'tis better far to laugh, than
 weep!

Either, is oft a compliment to fools,—
 Better far halt to hear an ass's bray!—
 And when a passing scorn, or anger cools,
 One goes as calmly, as before, one's
 way!

LOOKING BACK.

BUT still, I own, I *sometimes* do look back
 With even a foolish wonder at the tales
 Of scandal some delight in—at all lack
 Of charity—all scorn of modest veils!

So bold are some!—yes! in *inventions*
 bold

Beyond belief, taking all darker views,
 Trusting to any legend they are told,
 Delighting ever in the foulest news—

Mistaking even what their ears may hear,
 And foremost every falsehood to repeat—
 So quick in blasting a brave man's career,
 Or pointing out a woman's wandering
 feet!

Aye! I have known brave deeds con-
 demned as base,
 Motives mistaken—actions falsely read—
 Unselfish ways o'ershadowed with disgrace,
 While wreaths were twining for some
meaner head!—

So dark the eyes of some—so full of mist,
 So little stored with wisdom is the
 mind!—

Nay! there are visions with an *evil twist*,
 As there are hearts that Love can never
 find!

THEIR GLORY!

SOME even seem to hold it as a glory
 To drag back into full review and light,
 A bitter grief, or melancholy story,
 That otherwise had passed from sound
 and sight!

Then have we seen the faces of such
 creatures
 Sparkle, like dying fires, with fuel
 renewed!

A flash of pleasure lightens up their
 features,
 As though with fresh vitality endued!

Without compunction they will rob a
 tale
 Of all that throws a light on darker
 places—

And when there *seems* a mystery, never
 fail
 To deck it with their own most evil
 graces!

'Tis true that there *are* dark, unwholesome
 skies

Where such may find an audience when
 they speak,
 And all these spiteful souls we would
 advise

Such foul and blasted realms as these
 to seek!

There they may slander to their hearts'
 content!

There may their stories be both free and
 bold—

And one false whisper to *such* regions
 lent

Will bring increase a hundred —
thousand fold!

SICKNESS AND PAIN AND SORROW—

VICTIMS of Pain and Sorrow they de-
 tested!

And if awhile within their home these
 rested

They soon were made to feel they were
 not needed—

So in their riddance pleasantly succeeded!

If any, under a *mistake*, should stay
 Awhile in home of theirs — each later
 day

That he might spend on earth he would
 regret it—

And though he *wished* might never more
 forget it.

His sufferings would be talked about—his
 pain,
 His anguish treated in a mocking vein—
 His time of weakness being just the hour
 To show that they had held him in their
 power!

If he resents these things, they stronger
 speak
 Their details, and will fresh *additions*
 shriek!
 And of ingratitude moan—yes! for *lies!*—
 And grieve o'er blindness—yes! of opened
 eyes!

See that these come into thy life no more—
 No! not even o'er the threshold of thy
 door—

Their hands are deeply, vilely stained—
 and such

As hands of cleanliness refuse to touch.

YE COARSER FORMS OF EARTH—

YE coarser forms of earth, whose uncouth
 tread
 Profanes the neighbourhood even of our
 dead,
 Dares tramp even through an Eden's
 sacred bowers;
 Whose very breath is poisonous to her
 flowers—
 Who, looking upwards, with envenomed
 eyes,
 Can see not God — but Satan — in the
 skies—

Who think the unclean streams *your*
 meadows know
 Through *others'* green and wholesome
 meadows flow—

Who, that *your* fields of herbs are dry and
 brown—

Believe storms on all *others'* fields shall
 frown—

Who, as your unripe nuts fall at your feet,
 Believe no *others'* nuts are ripe and sweet—

Who, that your hearts with brave thoughts
 cannot swell,

Believe all others cowardly as well—
 And who, incapable of love, will hold
 All human hearts incapable and cold—

Go! keep to thine own dwelling—come
 thou not
 Into another's fair, love-brightened spot!

Think not, because thou roamest in the
 night,

That none walk forth in warmth and joy
 and light—

That as no flowers grow round *thy* vulgar
 feet,

Shall flowers upon this earth be *never*
 sweet!

That *no* one in Love's tender eyes shall
 gaze,

Because she hath not smiled on thy mean
ways!

HER STEPS ARE SORE—

HER steps are sore, alas! with Envy's
 smart,

And Envy cutteth sharper than a knife—
 The sharper that it cannot reach "that"
 heart—

Beyond the reach of malice is "that"
 Life!

But if she cannot wear those laurel leaves
 She sees now shine around another's
 brow,

She still can clutch and *smirch* them, she
 believes,

The only question left unsolved is—
how!

Oh! many foul and evil ways she sought,
 The radiance of that wreath but seemed
 more strong—

Not *always* the success *she* craved is
 bought,

Even by detraction, lies, and stinging
 wrong!—

Time—that proves all things, *this* shall
 also prove,

One full of comfort, of unbounded worth,
 Neither the fiercest spite, *nor vainest love*,
 Will long keep life in "feeble" works
 of earth!

Dust let them throw!—true gems remain
 as bright,

Though time shall pass, fierce tempests
 o'er them roll,

Their value rests intact, the only blight
Is on their Envyer's stained and bitter
soul.

'TIS TRUE—NO QUESTION!

'Tis true — no question! — if exceptions
prove
The rule; that "loving woman" can, at
times,
Forget that she was born to help, to love—
And hold that Charity but adds to
crimes!

What thy right hand shall find to do—*do
well—*

May be their rule! and when they hate—
ah! *then*

You sometimes think of a "cool" place
called Hell—

Filled — so *they* shriek — by souls of
wicked men!

To hate and stain appear their dearest
wishes,—

That path they envy!—cover it with
lies!—

Oh! put a poisoned spoon in all *those*
dishes!—

And where the eyes are bright tear out
those eyes!

Let not a rag remain upon *her* back,
Save it is one much tattered, or moth-
eaten!

Let not a flower bloom on *her* onward
track,

A fair plum ever in her garden sweeten!

Blister in every way her very name—
Drag all she loves through hateful mire
and dust—

Bring her—if *thou* hast power—to grief
and shame

Then—sleep the sweet sleep of the good
and just!

MODERN VICES!

WE hear much of the vice of olden times—
We hear much of past bold and reckless
crimes—

But—did "they" lie and slander in that
day
As now "they" love to do in *ours*—we pray?

In nights when the tired shepherd lay
asleep,
Into the field came thieves to steal his
sheep;
But did they also seek to steal a name,
And try to bring the innocent to shame?

*And did they slander mothers to their
daughters?*

And cast, not bread, but poison, on sweet
waters—

And make all wholesome and all fragrant
fruits

As hideous in men's eyes as snakes and
newts?

And did they spend their hours in vulgar
praise

Of their own selves and all their pious
ways?—

And think that none dwelt on these earthly
plains

So pure and spotless and so free from
stains?

O! modern souls—until ye prove ye are
Than others—older—sweeter, purer, far—
I don't think ye need lift your heads so
high

As even to dare to *dream* of Heaven's fair
sky!

SIN FOR FRIEND AND FOE.

YES! *how* is't that *some* people, whom one
knows,

No sense have of the shame of telling
lies!

One sort for friends — another sort for
foes—

In which *arrangement* they are
wondrous wise!"

When once the weed of lies to such is
known

In all their corners you its seeds may
find,

With prodigality, indeed, are sown,
Upon that Thing they "please to call
their mind!"

'Tis said to be a sober fact,—I fear
 A fatal one, indeed — that certain
 men
 And women, whom you may encounter
 here,
 Can *never* follow Truth by lip, or pen!

Lying hath grown so common to their
 lips
 They cannot *live* without the deadly
 draught—
 Now taken in "deep drinks" — now
 "dainty sips"—
 Oh!—standing near—how hath "the Old
 One" laughed!!

Truth cannot constant be to such as
 these—
 Or *they* — forsake her for more hot
 pursuits!—
 Lies now are told to injure — now to
 please—
 And all shall to the devil bear their
 fruits!

"REVENGE IS SWEET!"

HE CRIES.

"REVENGE is sweet!"—he cries—"now
 comes my turn!
 Ah—what is Love beside it!—Hate can
 burn
 To a far fiercer flame than love, I
 know,
 One looks quite pale beside the other's
 glow!

"The point that we would reach *is this*—
 to see
 Another writhe and smart as *we* have
 smarted—
 How glorious would such 'consummation
 be,'
 What rich, triumphant joy for the bold-
 hearted!

"Revenge is sweet! yes! sweeter far than
 Love,
 A truth too oft admitted to discuss!
 It may not quite—*quite* reach us from
 above—
 But 'tis a necessary thing to us!

"Revenge is sweet—and *would* that I had
 dealt
 A hundred blows, each harder than the
 last,
 To make 'that other feel' what I had
 felt,
 And what I suffered, in the days now
 passed!

"Ah, yes! Revenge is sweet! for its dear
 sake
 There is but little I could not endure!
 Oh! for *one* precious pleasure—Oh! to
 make
Another's bosom bleed beyond all cure!"

A PITEOUS COMPLAINT!

"Oh!—the *number* of her lucubrations!"—once
 cried a critic of ours.

ALAS! poor soul! — poor soul — Oh!
 once

Were tales told of a knave *and* dunce
 Who never dared to sit up late—
 Even if he could—*could* "lucubrate!"
 For there were those who knew him
 well,
 Who pretty tales of him could tell!

He liked to go to bed *in time*—
 Not wait for midnight bells to chime,
 When shapes he might not like to
 meet
 Might pop up from beneath his feet,
 To tell of deeds of "other days,"
 In not the pleasantest of ways!

Therefore for him to "lucubrate"
 Was daring an unhappy fate!
 He is—we won't say coward—*no!!*
 But likes not "calls" paid from "be-
 low!"—
 Nor greatly cares to have pale ghost-*es*
 Peep grimly at him through bed-post-*es!*

YES! WE LOVE FUN.

OH! if you think *we* ever cared a straw
 For certain critiques, when both coarse
 and strong,
 And that they *could* have made *our* feel-
 ings "raw,"
 As some have put it—*truly you are*
wrong!

We have indulged in reading criticisms
On both our grave and lighter authors—
ever
Since we remember—whether “witticisms,”
Or “cuts”—such as might soul and
body sever!!

For so *we’ve heard some speak of them—*
and smiled—
Not cynically—no!—but with surprise
To see some authors seeming almost wild,
When “adverse notices” have met their
eyes!

Let all have their opinions!—what we
write
May seem but “balderdash” * to some
—to us
Such critiques bring no feeling of that
“blight”
Whose villainy some poor souls will
discuss!

For “funny papers” we have always
taken!
Enjoying *Punch* or “any other” one!
So have we with light laughter often
shaken
Our critic’s grief to mark! For—WE
LOVE FUN!!

“A CERTAIN CLASS!”

OH! of a *certain* class of critics—you
May note this—they are neither seen,
nor heard!
Au contraire—disappear from public view,
Excepting when a *smouldering* spite is
stirred
By something they can shape into a seal,
To stamp the burning envy that they feel!
They noticed not our songs of the blue
ocean—
Though if could *any* songs stir British
souls
These surely might create some — *some*
commotion!—
When we speak of old Albion’s wave
that rolls,
And breaks and echoes, with resounding
roar,
Upon her yet unconquered, fearless shore!

But they “uprear as serpents”—can they
say
A word of bitterness — point out the
verses
That paint the vulgar *tracks* that such as
they,
Pursue—and fling about what read like
courses,
Of Love — that “balderdash!” * — O
mother Earth!—
Some of thy children cause both scorn
and mirth!

BURNING HIS OWN FINGERS!

AYE! they but in *excusing* terms did speak
Of one who error made in “ancient
Greek”!
And when he words of grammar blundered
o’er—
They said it was “unfortunate” — no
more!
Aye!—spoke as speaks an angry soul—
yes! quite!
As though this ignorance was exposed from
spite—
Yet surely he no right had to be critic
Who could not “bowl straight” *even* from
his own wicket!

Oh! when an angry *writer*, out of rage,
War with an author with “hot pens”
shall wage,
Inspired by anger only—not with *learn-*
ing,
He sometimes finds his own poor fingers
burning!
This is not stuff of which—as all must see—
Our judges should be made! who thus
can be
But food for merry laughter—or for scorn,
When we the masks have from their fea-
tures torn!—

For they but in excusing terms did speak
Of one—a *friend*! who erred in quoting
Greek!
And when *they* words of grammar blun-
dered o’er
They said it was “unfortunate” — no
more!

* See ante.

YES! PRETTY TRICKS!

YES! pretty tricks will *certain* papers
 play
 Even in this *very* fair and honest
 day!—
 And we have known *one* of these, more
 than once,
 Try many schemes to shield a "*favoured*"
 dunce!

We've known them place what proved a
false complaint
 Where, to attract the eyes 'twas but too
 sure,
 But its *correction* was in letters *faint*,
 And hidden in a corner *most* obscure!

It needed not a magnifying glass
 To read that grumbling critic's "angry
 fling,"
 But when we wrote to show that man an
 ass!!—
 Ha! *that*—you see—was *quite* another
 thing!

Not in excuse for *us* did it occur
 To him, our critic, that mistakes *will*
be!—
 So far from this, when it was made "by
 her"
 It was the *vilest* blunder—don't you
 see!

But all that manner of his, in re-
 proving
 Our error, vanished in his own dear
 case!—
 'Twas treated then quite in a manner
loving!
 Aye! a mere *blunder*, then — not a
disgrace!

For *us* to make mistakes would be a
shame—
 Our name with a coarse blot they'd
 henceforth smudge!
 But not for those who loudly make the
 claim
 Of "sitting on" an author, as his
 Judge!!

TO POOR SATIRIZED CRITIC.

OH! "Go! forget me!"* let us ever
 pass
 Away from thy sad memory, hapless
 being—
 As warm breath from a cold, a frosted
 glass!
 No more with thy weak stomach dis-
 agreeing!

Oh! "Go! forget me!" Aye! forget that
we
 Threw ever o'er thy life its bitter
 gloom—
 So once more—where thou now may'st
 chance to be,
 Thy seeds—thy plants may grow, thy
 flowers may bloom!

Oh! "Go! forget me!" let the light
 again
 Come back into thy darkened, dreary
 gaze—
 Speak no more of sad heart and weary
 brain,
 Go! go in happiness upon thy ways!

"Oh! "Go! forget me!" be as once
 before!—
 Content as sheep upon a peaceful
 field—
 Ah! let us haunt thy midnight dreams no
 more—
 Such power as this we *never sought to*
wield!

Oh! "Go! forget me!"—so may summer
 come
 To hang her pretty flowerets o'er thy
 bowers—
 The voice of self-torment at last be
 dumb,
 And peace and comfort fill thy later
 hours.

REST YE IN QUIET!

WAS'T wrong—that I so often laughed i'
 th' sleeve—
 Oftener perhaps than *some* folks could
 believe!—

* The quotation of this old ballad comes easily to us, as many years ago we often heard it—*atrociously*, sung!

To think of that long-threatened, *mystic*
blow,
The "terrible *tu quoque*" — don't you
know!

And what do these poor idiots now think
Of the sad figures they "cut" in these
times—

How often in their *slippers* they must
shrink,
Whenever the weird hour of midnight
chimes!

'Tis then that they as "terrible" *should*
show—
To frighten one who loves these silent
hours—

Coming up grimly from the *place below*,
Armed with some ghostly weapon, or
hell-powers!

Poor *things*—how they must pray our songs
to cease—

Lest some *themselves* hold up, in no
sweet view!
For not till then shall they e'er rest in
peace—
Nor longer in "their own rich *grave*
stew!"

Oh! listen not—as midnight thunder rolls—
Although each peal seems than the other
louder!—

Rest ye in quiet, fretful little souls,
And take at night some gentle "soothing
powder!"

CAN'T HELP IT!

YES! I *can't* help a little laugh, at times,
To think of critics of whom I've been
told,

At least of *one* — who as the midnight
chimes
Ring deeply, *will* not let his blood run
cold!—

But sets himself to cut up *that* "last"
Vol.!

And would be lost in such task of
despair

So as to note not the first smile of Sol,
Till Chanticleer's shrill crow disturbs the
air!

'Tis mighty pleasant labour, I've no
doubt—

One that I hope they have not yet given
up!

Nor ever *will*, so long as I'm about
The earth to give them works on which
to sup!

For oh! "Othello's occupation's gone"
When that last — *quite* last book of ours
is done—

When I may be in some sweet, heavenly
spot,

And where our critic may — *perhaps* —
come not!!

Yes! I can't help a *little* laugh at times,
To think of critics of whom I've been
told—

At least of *one*—who as the midnight
chimes

Ring deeply, *will* not let his blood run
cold.

A LITTLE CLIQUE.

So never—my good friends—do ye forget,
Counting each step we take upon our
way,

Veiled in the gloom, there hides a certain
"set,"

Who loathe us as might Satan loathe the
day!

Oh! each new book they watch with hate
that verges

On an insanity of rage and spite—
As kites might watch a chicken that
emerges

From its fair shell into the open
light!!

A battle with the critics?—*no such thing!*
These have been helpful friends — the
one and all—

No bitter thoughts *their* pens in writing
sting,

Nor is there *cause* why these *should* dip
in gall!

Where'er our foes write from, be sure of
this—

It is a *little* clique, and one, alone,

That feels to "cut us up" the greatest bliss

Their souls yet in this "wicked world" have known!

Look out, good friends, 'and you may always mark

The work of these dishonourable foes,
Who hate our "Watches," yet hide in the "dark,"

And, veiled in shadow, deal their angry blows!

A CRITIC—PLAYING INTO THE AUTHOR'S HANDS!!

"Poems reeking with slander and full of spite."—
From a Critique.

NAY! friend—thou dost play well into our hands,

Although by no intention of thine own!
But to be well abused on English land

Is almost to be "favourably known"—
That is when the abuse is of thy kind,
Consisting in sly stabbing, from behind!

So I am told—for I, you see, am quite

An ignoramus, on such *knotty* points!
Some say the little arrows of hot spite
Find out all flaws in new-made armour joints,

Thus make its owner look to keep it bright,
And see it is in order for the fight!

It may be so—aye! I *believe* it so!
But little of these matters yet I know—

Rather I *simply seek to do my best,*
And leave to Fate—and "Providence"—
the rest!

Nothing of such ignoble, vulgar strife
Can cloud, or much disturb, *my* path of life!

No doubt, as hath been said, and sung in song,

The English hate injustice of all sorts!

And scenting Malice they look out for wrong,

And love demolishing its little—forts!
Fair, open fight—no "stabbing in the dark,"

But aiming boldly at a well-seen mark!

This, firmly, of the *most* do I believe!

This principle I treasure as a creed—
The English love not him who shall deceive,

Who, *hidden*, seeks to make another bleed—

And—failing, or succeeding, veils his face,
As though in dread of well-deserved disgrace!

A GOOD "SAYING" FOR OUR CRITIC.—I.

"Tell Truth and shame the devil!"

"In the Watches of the Night," saith a certain Critic, "*reeks* with slander!"

"Poems of Tenderness and Refinement," says another Critic!

AYE! learn this "saying" well—learn thou with fear—

Let "slander" stain no longer *thy* career—

Gird up thy loins—thou "feeble" one—aye! "gird

Thy loins," and from thy *downward* pathway turn!

"Too much" thou dost not fear, unhappy one,

The Devil whose vile doing *all* should shun!

Oh! from his gruesome" presence see you try,
With all the strength remaining thee, to fly!

Tell truth! fear not the sulphur and the flame

Arising from below!—and thou wilt shame Him of whom we have spoken, in his rude

Attempts upon thy presence to intrude!

'Tis plain that thou hast met him but too often—

We would, indeed, that we had power to soften

The stern regard with which must Truth
now view thee,
Whose "dogs of war" are ready to pursue
thee!

Thou art for ever on Truth's pathway slip-
ping—
Nor shalt thou outrage her and yet
"scape whipping!"—
Oh, hapless one—for thy remaining days
Pray to her to amend thy evil ways!

A GOOD "SAYING" FOR OUR CRITIC.—II.

THEY say it is not given *all*, to see
Old Satan when he cometh from below,
And *grimacing*—if silent, stands by thee,
Warming thy parlour by his pleasant
glow!

Look out—dear critic! he may even come
To scent with fragrant scent thine own
"sweet home";

Look out! we know that he *will* have his
pay,
If once thy steps are marked upon *his*
way!

For Satan's a "rough customer" at
times!

Although he winks at all committing
crimes,

The *while* they are so pleasantly em-
ployed!

But not much "chill" is *afterwards*
enjoyed!

He hath "a way," you see, that's all his
own—

To make his watchful presence quite
unknown

Until thou dost require the whip, or
chain—

Then—thou may'st pray, or struggle,
friend, in vain!

O gentle critic—be it understood
These "hints" are "given solely for *thy*
good"

Being right sorrowfully moved, you know,
To note the road thou art resolved to
go!

STERNER WORDS.

(About the "reeking with slander" of "In the
Watches of the Night.")

IN these three words thine own state is
described!

Truly thy lips with very slander reek—
One might think Satan that false pen had
bribed

That such untruth as this thou dardest
speak—

Of poems *others*, in words true, as brief,
Called "poems of refinement and of
grief!"

There are into this universe *some* born
With whom hath nature surely hardly
dealt—

She seems to treat them with a very scorn,
So in return a scorn themselves have
felt!—

Whose words sound as though sent up
from *beneath*!—

Who seem with very rage to gnash their
teeth!

*Thou speakest falsely with a fatal ease—
Thy charge is untrue of this work of
ours—*

And as no book of ours can ever please—
Thou usest on it evil-nurtured powers—

Thus falsehood seems to give thy soul no
strain,

To teach *thee* truth might many teach in
vain!

We speak unvarnished truth, and for the
sake

Of sweeter, truer souls than such as
they—

We would they such fair views of life
might take,

And choose through earthly plains a
cleaner way!

Thou wilt have joy even *this* side of the
grave

O Pilgrim—if thou honest art, and brave!

THE PRICKS OF CONSCIENCE!

DOTH Conscience then so sharply prick
thee, friend,

That *words* thou callest *slander*!—words,
alone!

Thou who to be a Critic doth pretend,
To whom *should* names and subjects be
unknown!

Not simply of "reviewers" here we
speak—

Doubtless—of none of the *true* critic
class;—

Why doth this blush of anger dye thy
cheek

If *honestly* for Critic thou dost pass?

Tell us how dost thou know to *whom* our
pen

Hath been — one could swear — *right-
fully* applied!

Thou hast the veil from thine own features
torn,

Forgetting truth and honesty and pride!

Again, if of *thyself* we speak, thou art,
And can'st not be—fair judge of work
of ours—

Thou who hast played so long an evil
part,

Who—fearing to be seen, in darkness
cowers!

Once more—if one of the said "Critic-
world,"

Nor knowing us nor those of whom we
write,

Why hath thy lips with such fierce anger
curl'd—

How *dar'st* thou say our words are
those of "spite"?

A fool art thou!—for all may rightly name
One such, who can put forth no open
claim

To know of *whom we speak* and yet doth
doubt

The truth of what he knoweth *naught
about!*

To blame a slanderer is not slander—
No!

To tell truth of a liar is not lying—

To deal a merited, much-needed blow

Is not for combat to be always sighing!

Art such as thou fit for the Critic's place—
Fit to be judge, with cool, impartial
brain?

Thou only can'st that lofty seat *disgrace*—
Go back to thine obscurity again!

SHOT HOME!

Ah! ah! my friend—and so it hath shot
home!

An arrow hath been lodged, then, in
your breast!—

Methinks one need not always go to
Rome

To learn!—some truths may be at home
impressed!

Ah! ah! the arrow was, it seems, well
aimed,

And "entered" at the race you love
to run—

To be its victim you unwisely claimed!

You have betrayed yourself—my little
one!

You have been wounded—yet so little wise
Were you, you bared your wounds to the
keen eyes

Of those who *sometimes* have in rogues
believed,

And yet are loth to long remain deceived!

So we have slandered you — *you*, of
"pure" gold—

Who have so long such fables of us
told!

Come forth—stand up in the fresh, whole-
some air,

And show us that thy wounds are wounds
unfair!

Truth should not be so strangely shy of
light!

And if her hands are just so *very* white

Why fear to show them to the open day—

Why always run at *our* approach away?

AGAIN—A STERN REBUKE.

To —.

WAS David—loved of Heaven—a slanderer
—when

He said there were "none righteous—
no! not one!"

He, being far above his fellow-men,
Felt what it was to stand up in the sun!

But as for us—poor fool—hast thou forgot
That we but spoke as prouder spirits
speak,

Only against the slanderer, knave, or sot—
Who call all but themselves, liar, fool,
or sneak?

Hast thou "*Versus* a Woman" never
read?—

Canst thou not see that chiefly of *one*
class

We speak—*that* class of whom, have
many said,

"They slander all, except a fellow-ass!"

Do we slander the thief, when we demand
The things that he hath purloined he
restores!

Or when we drive him henceforth from our
land,

Nor let him steal again from our fair
shores!

Thou slanderest even one who hates the
slanderer—

To judge thee honestly by thine own
"*saying*"—

Thou art to Falsehood's queen a very
panderer—

Save when thine hours are spent with
donkeys—braying!

A NECESSARY WARNING!

I HAVE known many noble women, truly—
And also, I much fear, have known a
few

Of vanity extreme—temper unruly,
With eyes not of the sweetest, softest
blue,

But rather *green*—as pussy's are—we
know!

Emitting, now and then an evil glow!

Yes! stroke in the right way *that* pussy
cat,

Then all is well—and you shall have no
fat

Hissing and spitting on the parlour fire!
But stroke the *wrong* way and behold her
ire!—

Aye! and you'll feel the sharpness of her
claws,

Which little know of mercy's tender laws!

See that her skin is kept as smooth as
silk—

Feed her upon the very newest milk—
Hint not at her wrong doings on the sly,

Or open! and you have a placid sky:

But yet—forget not that those claws *can*
tear

Thy flesh—and of her sudden spite beware!

POOR THIEF!

"THEY are *always* grumbling at us"—
growled a thief—

"'Tis quite a *disgusting* thing to me—
you know—

For their meanness really is beyond be-
lief—

I wouldn't be so complaining—or—so—
low!

"Yes! really the meanest of all souls
that live!

It is time, methinks, that they should
feel *ashamed*—

For we only take what they *decline to*
give,

A thing that, you know, could not be
really blamed!

"And a grumbler's not at all a pleasant
thing—

And I hold"—said the thief—"that
these, themselves, are thieves—

And they speak of *ourselves* and quite im-
plant a sting;

I declare that their want of charity
quite *grieves*!

"Oh! they should be grateful characters
—should they!—

Not angered whene'er *we* chance to cross
their way—

Why *cannot* they let us, one may rightly
ask,

Go on with our self-imposed, and needed
task!"

"But no—they are always grumbling"—
said a thief—

"'Tis quite a disgusting thing to me—
you know—

For their meanness really is beyond
belief—

I wouldn't be so complaining—or so
—*low!*"

THE WRONG HOUSE.—I.

(No Critics live here—Try another number!)
"Is severe on Critics who do not appreciate her verse,"
saith a tyro.

FOR critics we have great respect—none
greater—

But *you're* a city snob, or city waiter!
Certes, no critic *you*—one sees right well—
Each "hobobservation" must *that* story tell!

"Slightly hysterical"! *—*could* any pen
Of *bona-fides* critic so review!
His only critique this!—an old fat hen
Had better cackled to Grimalkin's mew!

But why art thou so "personal"—and why
Pass o'er all poems of the stars—the sky!
Is it the "smoky walls" that hurt thy
feelings,
The consciousness of unclean floors, or
ceilings?

Thou art "too much" a "person" in
one sense—

Aye! as a clown with intellect so dense
For songs of gentler things it feels no
need,

Only seeks *something* of *itself* to read!

Yes! *can* you for a critic's part be fit
For what is a "slight" thing, as you
admit,
You all else that the volume may contain
Pass o'er—Oh! thou of brilliant soul and
brain!

THE WRONG HOUSE.—II.

AYE! "critics" do ye call yourselves, but
we

Refuse ye that high title, don't you see!—

Have we not put you in *quotation*
marks,†

Here, not the noble dog, but Reynard,
barks!

For "any one" may do as you have done,
Who call yourself a critic—untaught one!
Put on the cap of Wisdom—*on one side*,
So wear it, friend, with an *abundant*
pride!

Did we take every one, on his own
"showing,"

Good folks, how droll a world our eyes
might see!

The fool were statesman—one, he'd think,
"most knowing,"

The spiteful wags vow that he is "queen
bee!" •

We call *that* man a critic, who can show
A mind of learning, and a thought-lined
brow—

As in our brilliant judges. Ye *must* know
Your claim to have these things can
none allow!

We love our critics! they were just *and*
kind—

And whenever they an error pointed out
We bowed at once to their superior mind,
Knowing that they — *do* know what
they're about!

A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

(CONCERNING CERTAIN ANONYMOUS

ATTACKS AND REVIEWS.)

YOU don't know what goes on behind the
scenes,

Good friend!—you see me open in *my*
blows—

No secret, *unsigned* charge my pen de-
means—

And I would face—if *I see not* my foes!

For I have never feared them—friend—
no, never!

I could, methinks, *unveil* some—if I
chose!—

* "Slightly hysterical poems"—"severe on critics," &c.—*The Western Daily Mercury*.

† On certain well-known "critics" of "In the Watches of the Night."

But—like the stream, I might, “flow on
for ever,”
As far as their attempt to “dam” me
goes!

Oh! if you *praise*—it is another thing!—
You *may* say kindly things behind a
veil—

Only be open when you seek to sting—
For all admit that’s *quite* another tale!

Do good by stealth and “blush to find
it fame”!

All that is as it should be—proper—
quite!

All other warfare seems *to me* a shame—
Aye! stabbing in the darkness—fearing
light!

And to such rules I, evermore, shall
keep—

Behind my foes, friend, I will never
creep,

As “Mantalini” would have said—to
“demn”

Their works—*such warfare shall be left
to them!*

THE “OTHER” CRITIC OF “IN THE WATCHES OF THE NIGHT.”*

“POEMS OF TENDERNESS AND REFINEMENT.”—SECOND CRITIC.

AYE! ’tis a fact to state and not discuss!
Poems of “tenderness”—“refinement”
—“prayer”

And “sorrow”—yes!—of the same verse,
thus

Spoke one who could for truth and
honour care!

Yes!—yet another of that same, avowed—
The book just “reeked with slander”!
—he was one

Who, as it seemed—to *lie* was not too
proud,

And did it gaily, as though often done!

And practice maketh perfect — we have
heard!—

Read—friends—that book of which this
critic speaks—

And see if it be true, as he averred,
That but of slander and of spite it
“reeks!”

No “vermin is so odious” — said of
old

A famous writer† — aye! more loath-
some—than

The “slanderer of books”—and so *we*
hold;—

Therefore *this* vermin all of us should
ban!

’Tis not *opinion*, here we mean, for
that

May be as free and open as you
please—

Into a royal face may look a cat!—
Although they say that it is rude to
sneeze!

All may say what they please as to “dis-
likes”

And “likes”!—may even hate the fair
and true—

But falsehood, as a thing “improper”
strikes

On even the *least* “straitlaced” or
“worldly view!”

A CONFLICT OF OPINIONS!

(*i.e.*, concerning the same poems.)

1st Critic. “Full of trustful and tender religious
feeling.”

2nd Critic. “Poems reeking with slander.”

Look thou into the glass—thou who dost
speak

Thyself such slander—look at that coarse
brow—

See if no blush of shame hath dyed thy
cheek—

For *can* there be a meaner thing than
thou!

“Slanderer of books” art thou — thou
writhing worm—

Who truly would do well those words of
scorn

* See ante.

† Fielding declared that there could be no more odious creature than the “slanderer of books.”

To take unto thyself—the scathing term
Fits thee and all who of thy race are
born!

“Trustful and tender” and “religious
feeling!”—

These in the mind of one can hold no
place

Who like a coward speaks untruths—con-
cealing

For very fear of shame, a lying face!

Only in one thing dost thou show that
yet

Thou dost possess of conscience just one
thread—

That there is something thou can'st not
forget—

Something to sting thee, once by true
lips said!

Once more consult thy glass—thou who
dost speak

Thyself such slander—look at that coarse
brow—

See if no blush of shame hath dyed thy
cheek—

For *can* there be a meaner thing than
thou!

COMPASSION FOR A POOR

SOUL!

To —.

How thou dost chafe against us, thou
poor soul!

I would that, meanwhile, even thou
might rest—

Thy sour and angry memories control,
And peace may yet re-enter thy torn
breast—

And fairer, sweeter days may yet be
thine—

The clouds may break—once more thy
sun may shine!

Forget us, hapless soul — it were far
better!

Remember that our paths lie far apart—
Let our existence be as a dead letter,

Oh! most unhappy as we know thou
art—

We feel compassion for thee and would
fain

Persuade thee—*never think of us again!*

Think only of this good advice of ours—
Forget thou that we ever wrote a book!—
O fretting soul, use all thy little powers
To turn thy face from us and elsewhere
look!

We *know* that we but good advice do give—
That—following it, thou wilt the happier
live!

THE ANSWER TO A “NEW” AUTHOR'S QUESTION!

“How work the Oracle, and make it
speak!”

Said a poor author once, whose anxious
face,

Whose weary eyes, whose colourless, worn
cheek

Showed that he ran at least, no easy
race!

Friend! you could hardly ask of any one
More ignorant that *I* have always been!

Blindfold I may be said my “race” to
run,

As far as *Critics* are concerned, I mean!

Some bitter Critics have themselves be-
trayed

By their o'er anxious proffer of advice!—
By pettishly emerging from that shade

Upon whose *veil* they put so high a
price!

But of my *honest* critics, friends, I know
Not simply little—*nothing*, I may say—

To me they even might be Esquimaux,
Or that strange soul that “lives across
the way!”

I deem it better thus—Aye! 'tis *far* better
That thus my critics but for Ghosts may
pass!

I do not wish to know *one single* letter
Even of their name, their country, or
their class!

They may be chimney-sweeps, for all I
care—

So their critiques are honest, strong, and
fair—

But were they *princes* of whose spite I've
read—

I should not let them o'er my threshold
tread!

PATIENCE AND COURAGE!

ONE who is wistful that great height to
gain
O'er which broods Fame, with her
strong out-spread wings,
Must needs fear not the pitfalls of the
plain,
And—patient—bear both gnats' and
adders' stings!

Full many briars will tear impatient
things—
Wolves shall attack him on untrodden
lands—
Unwholesome liquid the vile skunk will
squirt—
And poisonous hornets seek his deadly
hurt—*

Yet let him still be cool—and being so
He often shall defeat his vilest foe,
Even though that foe is veiled from curious
eyes
By the mean shift of some well-made dis-
guise—

With heart unfaltering and with steady
eyes
He shall look upwards to Fame's brilliant
skies—

His very soul he seems to clothe in mail—
Against him shall all arms of malice
fail—

'Tis a poor creature of these modern days
Whose paths are shaped to meet men's
fitful praise,
That follows not its chosen—strong career,
Unswayed by scorn, or by ignoble fear.

OF FAME.—I.

AYE! thou shalt be no guest at Fame's
great feast,
Thou shalt be even as her very least
If thou hast such a soul that thou shalt
care,

As some, alas! have done, even to despair,
For Envy's ever-following, jealous eyes,
For hatred's jarring and malicious cries—

Keep on thy way and keep thine eyes
uplifted,

Aye! to the mountain top thy gaze
direct,
And if with Genius hath thy soul been
gifted

See that thou dost not her great power
neglect!—

It may be thine for but so brief a time
That to regard it lightly were a crime.

Let not thine eyes be blinded—as some
eyes

Have been at the first dazzling glimpse
of Fame—

At the first scintillation of her skies—

At the first thrilling echo of her name!—
Go bravely on, with hope combatting fear,
Nor care what foes are met on thy career!

OF FAME.—II.

THINK you that any toiler here shall seek
To even reach the *footstool* of the great,
But there will gather round his path the
weak,

The envious!—those who ever lie in
wait,

Now—even as ever—from Earth's earliest
age,

To do the bidding of a jealous rage!

Some—needing the sufficient strength, will
falter,

As though the winds around them were
too bleak—

And some will work as though a very
halter

Were forcing them unworthy deeds to
wreak—

While Envy's accents jar upon the ear,
Bringing to some contempt — to others
fear—

Aye! but the stronger soul, by Heaven
upheld,

Works steadily through the working
hours of day—

Steppeth o'er rotten trees that have been
felled,

And goes with fortitude upon his way—
So shall he stand—at closing-in of light,
In his Creator's clear, unwavering sight!

* It is, we understand, an established fact that the sting of a hornet may be (if rarely), as swift and fatal in its effect as that of the most poisonous viper.

TOO TRUE!

"Where there is much light there will also be much shadow."—BECKERATH.

THOU speakest truth unquestionably—I
Have found it so—as, also, that the sky
Seemed fairer when the heavy clouds had
passed,
For hours when it was darkly overcast!

It were not well if our uplifted gaze
Received but the sun's warm, unclouded
rays,
Or if our hands were full of flowers—too
bright
To know *one* leaf despoiled by grub, or
blight!

The soul may with the body grow inert,
Devoted but to its own rest and
peace—
Aye! careless to avenge another's hurt,
And praying—*for itself*—that war may
cease!

After a blow shall sleeping souls awake,
And once again be roused their dormant
powers,
And when the heavy storms of summer
break
A freshness breathes through all the after
hours.

Where light is brightest are the shadows
deep—
So—dark—may be some Watches of the
Night;
And one who in the sombre gloom may
weep
Should look beyond it for the Coming
Light!

LOOK BACK!

Look back—ye poor, mean souls, upon
that past
On which those eyes so evilly once
glistened—
Remember those rude voices on the blast,
Some that ye echoed—all to which ye
listened!—

For then ye never thought the time could
come

When strength might come back to one
"bound to die!"*

Yes! that I yet might know a peaceful
time

Under the fairness of Life's later sky!

Go down upon your knees and ask that
God

Forgive ye for the lies of us ye spread—
Forgive ye for the crooked paths ye trod,
Thy slanders—of the living and the
dead!

Was life so empty to ye, that ye need
Distress the air with such discordant
strains—

Oh! need ye sow such crops of evil seed
Upon what, until then, were wholesome
plains?

Go ye not forth to *other* souls to preach—
Daring to offer counsel from weak lips—
It is *thyself*, vain soul, whom thou
should'st teach,

Who of self-righteous wine so often
sips!

If thou dost in a God believe, then pray
That thou may'st be forgiven that foul
path

That thou hast taken in thy thriftless day,
And so be saved from an Eternal wrath!

CLEVER PEOPLE!

"A person's character is nearly always taken away
by somebody who never saw him!"—Leader in
Standard newspaper, April 24th, 1883.

"THOU may'st amend the saying, friend,
and write,

By somebody who never *knew* him,
rather—

For there are those who know your face
by *sight*

But know your *mind* no more than—
Abel's father!†

"For one must put it strongly—friend—
I feel!

Even if, a trifle, I 'o'erstep the
border!'"—

* As was once declared.

† The delicate way once in vogue of saying "Old Adam!"

And yet you may have nothing to conceal,
But they — have brains not of the
'highest order!'

"Oh! I have known mean-minded souls
who call
Themselves born rulers—fit for earth's
high places,
Who think their eyes can pierce through
even a wall
That has been built up straight before
their faces!

"In their own coarse abuse will they
believe,
Even when they give their fancy widest
reins—
It is themselves no doubt that they de-
ceive
With dreams they conjure up in their
fool's brains!

"How *can* they credit you with thought
and act,
With sentiments they have no power to
feel!
Nay! if you knew their 'state of mind,'
in fact
To them the real is false—the false the
real!"

THE "KNAVISH TRICKS" OF "POLITICS!"—I.

"In 1879 and 1880 the inferior portion of the Tory
Party circulated a multitude of untruths concerning
me. . . I am happy to think that this kind of
warfare is unknown to the Liberal Party."—*Times*,
Oct. 29th, 1885.*

AYE! there is still a use, one sees, of
"butter"

In politics, if no more traitor's kisses!
But it is sad to see great statesmen utter
A party sentiment as mean as this is!

Do Tory principles so much degrade
That holding them a man is like to
lie!—

Of villainy learns not to be afraid!—
And are there any that can tell me
why?

Again—*would* Liberals lie against their
Chief?

But if he "turned" *Conservative*—what
then!

Is it not that he holds the "Liberal
Brief"

That he so compliments the Liberal
Men?

So! we may learn—not from a wise, old
Book,

"Thou shalt not lie" — but from a
Liberal-preaching;

And need no longer to our Bible look
For truthful principle — for truthful
teaching!—

A little odd—this *summary*—to one
Who may not comprehend men's
"politics"!—

No doubt a "kind of thing" right often
done,

Yet — just a *little* — tastes of "party
tricks"!—

THE "KNAVISH TRICKS" OF "POLITICS"!—II.

AND may a mouse unto a lion speak!
And offer just one crumb, one little
crumb

Of its experience?—if its voice is weak,
Beside the lion's, it *may* reach to—
some!

I have been lied against beyond all
measure,

Aye! just through "thick and thin" and
that for years—

Now from malignity, and now for
pleasure—

For "lying" is a *treat*—in some
careers!

And those that lied against me were not
"Tories,"

But "Radicals," of even the "deepest
dye"!—

The bigger Radical the bigger stories!—
The fiercer democrat the fiercer lie!—

* This was stated by Mr. Gladstone writing from Hawarden, in reply to a letter from a gentleman, whose name was not given.

Of my experience I the facts but tell—

Yet think me not so "prejudiced" that truly,
I could believe *no* Tory lies as well—
Or that *but* liberal tempers are unruly!

Bad Tories and—Good Liberals are—*some few*

Upon this earth—each in his following bold!

Not through *experience* THIS fact I knew—
'Tis rather one I happen'd to be told! !—

FALSE FRIENDS.

ONE ought, no doubt, to be to anger slow,
And ever swift to pardon—this we know—
But one on whom thy heart could not depend
In trouble, keep no longer as thy friend.

No! such take never to thy bosom more—
Place them not in that high place, theirs before,
Although the stones once proffered you to eat
They gladly now would change for whole-some meat.

Is it for *your* sake that they seem to strain
All their poor powers to be your friends again
Is it for *your* sake that they crave, once more,
What they betrayed and trampled on before?

No! in good truth!—it had not grieved *them* much

If Fate your troubles daily had increased—

Oh! if you put such friendship "to the touch"

That much you had not failed to learn, at least!

And it may cause contempt, though not surprise,

When cool denial of past sins one hears—

Dust—blinding dust—will always fill *some* eyes,

And wool is the material in *some* ears!

AYE!—KNOWN TOO WELL—

FALSE friends and sneaking foes—Aye!
known too well—

Full many tales of these could Satan tell!
O'er many plains of earth they take their way—

Their hours for toil are many—few for play—

They keep their labours well concealed from sight—

In darkness work, even when in numbers strong,

If taxed, will loudly boast they do the right,—

If heard to sing — it is a "pious song"!—

Wherever are made roads for human feet,
Across a moor, or through a mountain hollow,

Wherever silly sheep are heard to bleat
False friends and sneaking foes are known to follow—

And jealousy is strong upon the march,
And often of the last to fall behind—
Although her lips with burning heat may parch,
Although her breath is hot upon the wind—

False friends and sneaking foes—they are not proud!

And they are hard to track and to expose—

And often, unknown to life's busy crowd,
Through subterranean routes their river flows!

WHAT THEY THOUGHT—

NOTHING!

AYE! it seemed nothing—to encrust with shame

Another's, though it were a stainless name!

But let some truths be only told of *them!*—

Ah! *how* should they enough such crimes condemn!

"Oh! the world's wickedness!" they would declare—

"It really fills one with 'divine despair'! Yes! one *must* say one almost feels *surprise*

At such audacious—such *stupendous* lies!"

They slander as they speak—yet are so blind

To their own faults 'tis seen they *really* think,

While sin is the pursuit of "all mankind"
They—being "saints" from even its *shadows* shrink!

Condemn not, is, we learn, no creed of theirs—

Besides they understand *all* things—we know!

Can penetrate the *heart* of men's affairs,
And *always* find it hath an evil glow!

We know the sort!—They who speak ill of others—

Or *write* ill—just according to the case!
Describing sweetly all their Christian brothers

And sisters as "booked" for the Devil's race!

SO!

So! *you* would like to figure, even once more,

As those "true friends" we *dreamt* you were before!

And hoping that we may not understand
This late, insidious proffer of the hand!

Ha! *would* you thus have proffered it—if we

Had still been lying close to death's own gate!

Would you, *did* you, then care as friends to be,—

Nor thought such friendship useless—as too late!

Now strength is ours we *might* "unfold a tale,"

That some might think to call a tale of shame—

And one that, plainly told, could hardly fail

To make the *veriest* jest of "friendship's" claim!

For friendships—we maintain—the true and fast,—

Are hardly — sneeringly — to be destroyed—

As weak plants killed by the first chilly blast—

But—elements! that *some* slight power enjoy!

Gone even, now, these plants that feebly grew

On places that are altered—or forgotten—

For they were always seeking "pastures new"—

So left their older rootlets to grow—rotten!

NO! I HAVE NEVER YET COM-
PLAINED OF FOES—

No! I have never yet complained of foes

As foes—*fought they but honest, open fight!*—

I have—*can* have no quarrel here with those

Who yet hold that no "view" of mine is right!

Some eyes are feeble, dazzled—small and weak!

They turn away from many scenes their gaze

Because the skies of northern shores are bleak,

Because the air is cold of mountain ways.

And there are those of such dull minds and brains

They cannot understand what lies below
The upper surface of earth's broken plains—

The fiery lava underneath the snow—

Aye! there are ears too deaf to hear the cries

That echo ever from earth's troubled track—

Aye! and the fowl sees not with eagle eyes,

And unto some rose colour seems but black!

And then, misunderstanding — fuming —
 fretting—
 Pass these through life—complaining—
 fevered—hot—
 From their life's sunrise to that sun's *dull*
 setting
 Theirs is an ignorant and an unwise lot!

I COULD ESTEEM THEM—

I COULD esteem them did they only speak
 With boldness and plain words their
 burning hate,
 Not—with hot, foolish mouth, unblushing
 cheek,
 Stand up—to judge things than them-
 selves more great.

It is not anger that the most I loathe,
 However reckless and however strong—
 So that it will not seek in robes to clothe
 What doth not to its uncouth shape
 belong.

One — *sometimes* — may respect an honest
 rage—
That springs but rarely from the selfish
 heart—
 And without trouble one may read a page
 In which a noble anger takes its part—

The meaner soul *strong* passion never
 knows—
 A calculating malice takes its place—
 It seeks to deal in secret its vile blows,
 To conquer but by *laming* in the race!

Yes! such will hide from you their lying
 features—
 Of secret daggers keep an endless
 store—
 Alas! *our* foes are of these hateful crea-
 tures,
 And call for strong contempt and no-
 thing more!

HARD TO LEARN!

LESSONS of Life—aye! ye are hard to
 learn!
 Though each may prove a lesson for our
 good—

Lessons of ice that chills—of fires that
 burn—
 Of arid desert, and of rushing flood—

For all things, truly, are not what they
 seem—
 Neither in twilight, nor in broadest day—
 And friendship often proves herself a
 dream,
 And as the merest mist will pass away.

And here the flower, long tended with such
 love,
 By blighting winds of north and east is
 chilled—
 And here the kite hath pounced upon the
 dove—
 And here the wolf the tender lamb hath
 killed—

And here the friend whose love you
 thought a prize
 Hath shown itself a viper on your path—
 Is as a very "beam" within your eyes—
 Is as a toad that spitteth by your hearth!

And here a glorious lesson still shall
 cheer—
 Of friendship's hand within the roughest
 glove;
 Of yet the honest smile—the tender tear—
 The lesson of undying, faithful love!

SOME PHILOSOPHIC ADVICE!

(INTENDED FOR EVERYBODY!)

DISCOMFORT when thou can'st thy bitter
 foes,
 'Tis right to separate the chaff and
 wheat,—
 But let them trouble never thy repose,
 Walk coolly o'er the snares laid for thy
 feet!—

Discriminate 'twixt poison-seeds and
 fruit—
 Thou needs must do it for another's
 good—
 But give not o'er much time to the pursuit
 Of evil things, that grow in vale, or
 wood.

It were not well they broke on peaceful
hours,
If they intrude upon thee, pass them by!
For thou may'st limit all such devil-
powers
So that they—*sometimes*, only—cloud the
sky,

So much is sweet in Life, so much is
true,
So much to lift a grateful heart to
God—
So much that smiles down from the sky's
deep blue,
To beautify earth's varied, flower-
bright sod!—

If the inclement wind blows from the
north,
Deem, in the end, that shrilly voice is
best—
And fearless in all scenes of Life go forth,
And thou may'st meet thy last winds
from the west!

TO —.

YES! it is ill for him who bath no foes—
Who never had to prove his strength in
fight—

Feeble each nerve, as time's stream on-
ward flows—
Pale his ideas may even become, of
right!

But strike thou never at an unarmed foe—
At one whose weapons have been stol'n
away—

Strike openly—and not like *some* we know,
Who love the practice of a dastard fray!

'Twere ill to let the viper keep the path—
The crafty fox around thy hen-roost
prowl—

To let the toad sit squatting by thy
hearth,—

To let the wolf behind thy homestead
howl!—

And though to keep them off be labour
hard,

Yet let no cat near to thy dove-cote
rest—

The hungry falcon hover o'er thy yard—
The ferret steal into thy rabbit's nest—

Be thou not slothful—let not these destroy
Thy peace and hurt thy heart whene'er
they can—

Earth hath no region of, unspotted joy—
'Tis just a sphere inhabited by—man!

LET THEM AMUSE

THEMSELVES!

THOUGH some few "petty-foggers" scold
aloud

Whene'er I "twang my lute," I simply
feel

My pensive moonlight, or my day's *warm*
cloud,

No curtains *they* can draw will e'er
conceal!

They are not *quite* of a "most noble"
class,

And might as well from "much-
complaining" cease—

They may not for our Latin students pass,
Nor yet for scholars—of the land of
Greece!*

Nor are their characters of just the
highest—

And many subjects are for them "*too*
burning"—

In battle they are ever of the *shyest*—
They shine by ignorance, and not by
learning! ! !

Let them amuse themselves—it hurts me
not!

Nay! oft is food for laughter, at odd
times—

Oh! but there is a point we quite forgot—
These never hear the bells of midnight
chimes!

One thing is certain—spirits such as these
Shall never take again their place of
old—

To work what hateful mischief they may
please—

Such folly may not of *our* paths be told!

* For they insisted that Phintias was Pythias, amongst other errors.

A COMPARISON OF DEFICIENCIES!

THAT Mrs. Dash, who is not *forced* to
earn

Her bread by the hard sweat of her own
brow,

Yet scoffs at Hodges that he cannot learn
His "English"—'twixt his followings of
the plough!

He knows not grammar—*she* not
charity!

The first the deadlier failing—all
must see!!

The whole day long he spends his hours
in working,

Aye! occupied in even the hardest toil—
She, meanwhile—all like labours gladly
shirking—

Cares not her hands with mould and
muck to soil!

He knows not grammar — *she* not
charity!

The first the deadlier failing, all
must see!!

Let each in his own manner—his own
place,

His task perform—be it on hill or
plain—

No honest work shall any soul disgrace,
But *slandering* ever leaves a deadly
stain!

He knows not grammar — *she* not
charity!

The *last* the deadlier failing —
seems to *me*!

To throw stones at a brother is not
sweet—

Let each look rather to his own poor
path—

See that no soil is on *his* hands, or feet,
That no mean heart beats by his own
warm hearth!

ONE MAY DO GOOD—YET NOT
BE "ONE OF THOSE"—

ONE *may* do good!—yet not be one of
those

Who, each, his own pet trumpet loudly
blows—

Yet—he is classed with selfish souls, by
some
Whose lips, through simple modesty, are
dumb!

'Tis knowing this misjudgment often
makes

So many boastful of their acts of good—
They tell how much they do for others'
sakes,

Although so often are—misunderstood!

Hear you this woman!—who declares there
dwell

None "pure" on earth, that all of sin
are full—

That if *all* souls may not be bound for
Hell,

At least that all are ignorant, mean, or
dull!

Hear you this man!—he says no words
can speak

The scorn he for the "wicked world"
must feel—

That it were vain for any one to seek
For honour, though his search be full
of zeal!

They quite forget—or *seem* to quite forget,
The left hand boasts not wisely of the
right!—

Far better our good deeds in darkness set
Than that *our* hands should drag them
to the light!

Man dwells not here that he reward should
seek

For praise, in fulsome record from his
friends—

These are our meaner souls—he is but
weak

Who lives his life for such ignoble ends.

TO A FRIEND.

(CONCERNING PEOPLE ONE HAS MET.)

O FRIEND!—I hear that thou hast often
said,

The ways of life that thine own footsteps
tread

Are such that all of us, who *would be wise*,
Should follow, here, would we reach
Heaven's own skies!

For thou hast found the path that leads
to Heaven
With certainty that not *to all* is given!
Moreover, is thy soul so good, so large,
That *others* thou would'st lead, *quite free*
of charge!

Nay! thou art kindly *eager*, even, to show
The rest of us the *way that we should go!*
How we thy very steps may humbly trace,
So as to win, at last, the heavenly grace!

The world is but a fool, it seems to thee—
Since that thy path it *seemeth not to see!*
Or even that it is *better* than "those others,"
Followed by all thy unbelieving brothers!

And though thou preachest that thou,
only, knowest
The way that is of pardon, grace, and
love—
They see not what thou *dreamest* that thou
showest,
That *thy* way — only — leads to realms
above!

A COMMON CHARACTER.

A COMMON character, as life can teach—
Too often noted by the shrewd and
wise—
One always seeming upright—keen to
preach,
A Pharisee—although in modern guise!

A common character—full often met!
One who an idiot's praises often wins!
One who can always its own faults forget
In pointing out some other creature's
sins!

A common character, and one more mean
Than even common in so many
ways—
One scarcely in an angel's footpaths seen,
Yet thinks its life a life that *all* must
praise!

A common character—that oft will dwell
In earth's obscurer corners, not in
light—
It loves not any of its faults should tell,
Or question that it *always* does the
right!

Aye! but a common character and swift
To see all human faults except its own—
One that assumes its holy eyes to lift
To regions that are for itself—alone!

TO A POOR SOUL.

THOU dost, poor soul, remind one of a
lute,
Of ancient fashion and of worthless
strings—

Whose very voice had long been wisely
mute,
But now an untaught hand its octave
rings!

Those harsh and untuned chords disturb
the air,—
Chords like thy language! — that can
have no part
In waking echoes—echoes sweet and fair,
Of the strong, earnest passions of the
heart.

Thou dost, again, remind of empty shells,
Or of rude weeds that keep not to their
place—
Of waters, with no buckets to their wells,
Of all things wanting finish—fitness—
grace—

And if we spoke of thee as of a man
We should conclude thou hast an empty
mind,
That hath in life no large, no noble plan,
Nor knoweth where he any such may
find!—

Thou hast, no doubt, thy use, but then
that use
Is modest—by no greatness can'st thou
shine—
To seek to rise were simply an abuse
Of that poor strength that only here is
thine!

WHAT THAT POOR SOUL PASSES OVER!

OH! songs of tenderness he passeth over—
Songs of the sorrowful—lays of the lover—
Tales of that sea that England loves so
well—
Nothing of these can make *his* bosom
swell!—

He loves not even the voices of that sea—
 He loathes the song of bird, the hum of
 bee—
 Stars of the summer night—the owl's weird
 cry,
 All these to him breathe of "monotony"—

On him the beauty of the world is lost,
 Nothing of all its joy and warmth he
 knows—
 And he would rather look to see the frost
 That nips the bud of spring's too early
 rose—

His ear was ne'er attuned to music's strain,
 Having "no music in his soul" alas!—
 A syren, even, would sing to him in
 vain—
 He listens but to brayings of an ass!—

Aye! pity him—harshly hath nature dealt
 By such an one—he who hath never felt
 The sweetness of true love—nor seen that
 light
 That makes our Earth—despite its sorrows
 —bright!—

So—songs of tenderness he passeth over—
 Songs of the sorrowful—lays of the lover—
 Tales of that sea that England loves so
 well—
 Nothing of these can make *his* bosom
 swell!

TO —.

IN ANSWER TO A LETTER.

FRIEND! you mistake! — for not the
 slightest care

Have I for any angry critics—*none!*
 Somehow each only seems "un drôle
 d'affair,"

I care not—I have never cared for
one—

They gave me some amusement—nothing
 less—

In some rare moments of forced idleness!

Yet I shall write a "Dunciad"!—but the
 work

Shall chiefly be accomplished for the
 sake

Of younger pens — I otherwise might
 shirk

All trouble on this point, nor care to
 take

Up leisure time for subjects such as these,
 Our dunces — that amuse, but hardly
please!

For I have noted many care by far
 Too much for *certain* critics—and o'er
 prize

Their value—nay! so "sensitive" they are
 One can but watch them with amuse-
 ment's eyes,

And I would show, by facts, to all men's
 mirth,

That, doubtless, SOME are fools upon this
 earth!!

And thereby shall I justice do to those,
 The men of wit and learning, whom
some class

With even an author's *paltriest* of foes!—
 As well confound the race horse with the
 ass—

The sparrow with the eagle—and the sprat
 With whale—the Bengal tiger with the
 cat!

STILL CONCERNING A LOUD

BRAY!

(ONCE HEARD IN THE "WATCHES OF
 THE NIGHT"!)

AYE—feeble soul!—why did'st thou ever
 pipe

That paltry—nay! that idiotic strain?
 Dost thou not know that nothing e'er can
 wipe

Those vulgar lips—so opened—*clean*,—
 again!

Love — "only Balderdash!" — Nature —
 "that Fool!"—

God "the Impossible"!—we know each
 phrase—

To place thee where those stupid heels
 might cool,

Would have been done to thee in former
 days!

And none deserve a horse-pond as dost thou
 A ducking—possibly—might do thee good!
 For all can see, on thy unmeaning brow,
 A wreath of *that* which forms the donkey's food!

To read thee shows to what class doth belong
 That pen; thy bray need not disturb the land!—
 The “mark” that thou hast made is but too strong,
 And showeth that an Ass can boast—a Hand!

No! scarcely worth a ducking—thou; nor more
 Than just some passing whiffs of strong disdain—
 For one hath often met thy sort before!—
 Disporting oddly on some—*barren* plain!

TO A DISBELIEVER IN LOVE.

O MISERABLE soul!—was Jacob's love,
 That centuries still tenderly regard,
 Only a thing thy vulgar soul to move
 To scorn, that soul so dreary and so hard—

And have we now a newer faith to learn,
 Forgetting the fair history of the past—
 From Love's sweet records scornfully to turn,
 Or doubt upon them bitterly to cast?—

Is man but as the elm-tree, full of years—
 A tree, that hath lost all its wholesome sap,
 With but the trunk to guard with smiles,
 or tears,
 While listening to the woodpecker's grim tap!—

Nay! but it is your dreary self, alone,
 Who miss all life may have of true and sweet—
 Whose poor existence even is as a bone
 On which was never good and wholesome meat!

Few on this earth—in village, town, or city,
 In deserts, or on plains where sunrays beam,
 Are more deserving of a true man's pity
 Than those who think Love nothing but a dream.

IN ANSWER TO A GROAN! FROM—.

(GROANED OVER THE WICKEDNESS OF
 HUMAN NATURE!)

THOU art one of a poor and narrow class—
 Thy gross conceit o'ershadows all thy ways—
 With vanity transparent as a glass,
 And with assurance quite beyond all—praise!

Thou art one of earth's feeblest recluses,
 Who yet would teach it how its orb to turn—
 Who prattles of reforming its abuses,
 And yet its simpler lessons needs to learn!

Teach thou thyself!—this life is not a game
 Of cards that one with little skill can play—
 And ere thou pointest out thy fellows' shame
 See that thine own poor feet go not astray!

The world, we said long since, would laugh to know
 Who thus stands up of all its sins to preach—
 What lips are those from which such scoldings flow—
 And from what stores of knowledge they may teach!

Again—teach thou thyself!—so much is dark
 To thee.—a myriad secrets yet unknown—
 And thou may'st make on earth a better mark
 Than by that useless and imbecile groan!

PATHS OF LITTLE KNOWLEDGE.

TRULY was their experience most small,
As was the famous travelled ant's of
old!

Who—marching grandly, o'er one garden
wall,

Dreamt that to him the whole world's
tale was told!

Because those whom *they* chose to know
were mean

And faithless, *others*, also, need be
vile!

Because the clouds o'erwhelm *their* life's
dull scene

No longer—they believe—the sun can
smile!

Because *their brains feel feeble*, it needs
be

Life shall be poor in all its work—its
worth!—

Because *their* steps are neither strong, nor
free,

They doubt, at once, of nobler steps on
earth!

Because their ears are quite untuned, or
dull,

So shall you sing sweet songs to them
in vain!

So shall they doubt that even this world
is full

Of many an exquisite and thrilling strain.

No! it is hopeless!—less their fault, at
last,

Than their misfortune—pity them, at
least!

Only, when in review their crowds are
passed,

Pray—that *their number shall not be
increased!!*

CERTAIN PEOPLE OF THIS
EARTH.

PEOPLE there are who arduous duties
shirk,

Who only share the easier of earth's
lives,

People whose paths but show the poorest
work,

Whose strength, whose power no
moderate work survives—

People—who few of worthier aims pursue,
Whose seeming friendship flattery only
wins,

Who spend their sordid hours in a review
Of *other* creatures' follies, woes, and
sins—

People who always let their right hand
know

Whate'er the left may think it wise to
do!—

And yet in blaming *others* are not slow,
Because they wear the very same mean
shoe—

People who, strutting through this world
of ours—

As though a "better sort" than all the
rest,

Are yet of just the very meanest powers,
And smallest capabilities possessed!—

People of whom few stories you may tell
That savour not of "pharisaic worth"—

Who think they are so "pure"—'tis strange
they dwell

Amongst the "impure" beings of this
earth!—

The world can never miss, nor *want* them
—they

Bear no part of its burdens on their
shoulders—

They walk their selfish—seeming-useless
way,

Offensive to the gaze of all beholders.

THE "ROOT" OF A TRIVIAL
STORY.

A SHRINKING back from all their kind
no doubt,

Was at the root of their most trivial
story—

Recoiling from all arduous toil without,
From most that crowns a Christian's
brow with glory.

Thinking less of a brother's pain or rue,
Than of the paths that might be *best*
for them—

And looking at it from no loftier view;—
Ah! but a mean plant this—both root
and stem!

'Twas easy, doubtless! to turn back from
Work—

Securing but the smoothest path to
tread—

'Twas pleasant!—all men's rougher tasks
to shirk,

Keeping an unlined brow *and* — un-
crowned head!

And Vanity lay at their Life's mean root,
A secret conscience may have had its
weight—

Feeling their want of strength—and skill
to boot,

How could they march in footprints of
the great!

They have but miserable failures been,
And leave behind no lines that History
traces—

And so would skulk behind a "Holy
Screen"—

Heaven save the mark!—that none shall
read their faces!

YES!—GHOSTS OF THE

PHARISEES!

LIVING apart from others, because they
Were so much holier, better than the
rest,

And prating that they had no need to
pray

Seeing that they—the holy—needs be
blessed—

To pray to be forgiven a cruel lie,
For shameless statements — words of
bitter spite,

A vile, deceitful smile—a mocking eye,
These were the fitting prayers for
them at night!

To be forgiven that their hours were spent,
Not on the mending of their own mean
ways,

But on the vile world's future punishment,
While singing their own private hymn
of praise—

To be forgiven that, upon this earth,
They play so poor, so strangely poor, a
part,

Believing only in their own great worth,
In their own holier soul and stronger
heart—

Yes!—that in this great, suffering, human
race

They, only, hold and keep a holy place.
Ah! prayers that we have heard of—
prayers like these

Are of the ghosts of old-world Pharisees!

"TELL IT NOT IN GATH!"

"TELL it not in Gath" — that on this
earth

Are those who don't believe in human
worth—

In whose eyes tender love shall never
shine—

Whose souls know nought of charity
divine!

Who yet boast they give much unto the
poor,

And that they turn no beggar from their
door—

Who loudly will of their own virtues
preach—

And louder still the sins of *others* teach!

For in this weary world of ours, are some
To whom the voice of their own sins is
dumb!—

Or it may be it speaketh to deaf ears—
Or maketh flow but fierce, rebellious
tears!—

Who fond excuse for *self* will ever make,
But find none of it — for *another's*
sake!

Scold sharply that *mean* thing, the human
race,

But always, from all blame, exempt *their*
case!

Aye! for they are the sweet exception—
they!
Their feet walk in a *quite* unspotted way—
Bound straight for Heaven!—Yet let me
hope that I
Come never near *their* corner of the sky!

TO ONE COMPLAINING OF EVERYBODY!!

'Tis easy, friend, to thunder against crime,
It hath been done a thousand times
before!

And yet—the smaller vices of our time
That noble spirits earnestly deplore,
The sowing of unwinnowed, smutted seeds,
In place of fragrant and of healthy
clover,

The strong and daring growth of poison-
weeds,—

These things our loud-tongued Christians
will pass over!

There will be many who deplore the strife
That still is loud in many homes below,
The heavy faults disfiguring human life,
The poisoned streams that through some
meadows flow—

The sickly flatteries, that still beguile—
The thousand petty falsehoods—slanders
vile—

The infidelity, whose brazen notes
Come from dissatisfied, or angry throats;

It may be so, yet do thy duty—thou
O Grumbler! put thy right hand to the
plough—

Set an example here of honest zeal,
That thy hypocrisy may no one feel!—
Let all perceive that thine are cleanly
floors—

Fear thou not to re-open thy closed doors,
That those who pass may freely look
within,

Nor see the shadow there of hidden sin!

PREACH UNTO THYSELF!

(TO ANOTHER MASCULINE GRUMBLER.)

AYE! preach unto thyself, poor fool!—and
tell

Thy soul that all things with thee scarce
are well—

Unwholesome weeds have overrun thy
path—
Unrighteous judgment sits beside thy
hearth.

While pointing out the robes that *others*
lack

Thou dost o'erlook the rags on thine own
back!—

Thou hast *no time* faults of thine own to
mend,

For all thy thoughts on others thou must
spend!

Yes! take to thought those tattered clothes
of thine—

Whose folds are hidden from the keen
sunshine—

Cleanse thou—and cleanse with care—its
many spots—

See moths corrupting! note the damp that
rots!

Thy thoughts are sluggish—and an evil
dust

Grows thick upon them, as all feelings
rust—

Thy heart grows feeble and thy brain
grows weaker,

The cold air of the earth seems bleak—and
bleaker!

So!—preach unto thyself—poor fool! and
tell

Thy soul that all things with thee are not
well—

Unwholesome weeds have overrun thy
path—

Unrighteous judgment sits beside thy
hearth!

SELF-TERMED CHRISTIANS!

THERE is, indeed, in this mixed world of
ours,

A race of "self-termed" Christians, who
conceive

That Heaven to *them alone* has given the
power

The truth to see, to teach and to believe!

Yes! we, alas! have met with such—and
thought

That of all creatures in this world of
strife,

They needed, of *all* mortals, to be taught
The first, pure lessons of a Christian's
life.

Look into your own hearts, and pluck
from thence,

Ye sinners! its diseased "self-righteous-
ness,"

That blackest of diseases, and from whence
Springs nothing that can purify, or bless!

Pray ye to Heaven—"Be merciful to me!
My soul is full of pride, conceit, and
sin!"

Those only who can thus their follies see
The crown of everlasting peace may
win.

KINDLY SAID!

(BY AN UNKNOWN MEMBER OF THE
WORLD.)

"As we said of the previous volumes, so can we say
of this—that the poems are marked by a graceful and
refined style. There is, it is true, a sadness about
many of the poems, but the author touches many a
chord of human sympathy; and those who have
tasted of the bitter cup of sorrow will, no doubt, find
consolation and comfort from the perusal of her
beautiful poems."*—*The Kentish Observer*, Oct.
15th, 1885.

A PRETTIER thing, friend — you could
hardly say!

*Would comfort—consolation—ever lay
Within our power!*—aye! for it is well
done

When we can "cheer up" but one "*little*
one"?

And greater pleasure could one scarcely
know

Than soothing any bitter, mortal groan—
To whoso bends beneath the weight of
woe

To speak — with sympathy's consoling
tone—

No! sweeter task may never be. Would I
Had need but of Earth's gentler souls to
write,

Had never known of cause to breathe a
sigh
O'er the more bitter souls of hate and
spite—

And yet a duty, and a stern one—this—
And turning often from Love's tender kiss
One needs to deal a swift, indignant blow
At the mean spirits of our paths below.

A WORD WITH THE WORLD!

'Tis said, Old World, thou wilt stand up for
those
Who stand up for themselves!—nor fear
their foes—

Therefore 'tis scarce a point we need
discuss,
We *know*—Old World—thou wilt stand up
for *us*!

For never—never—through thy faults, Old
World,

Have we thy many virtues left unnoted—
Or—that thy banner sometimes hath been
furled

Believed that it could never more be
floated!—

'Tis said the Devil, even, is not so black
As *some* will paint, with *unctuous*
delight!—

Some!—who men's sins make into a *huge*
stack,

That they may bring *themselves* before
our sight!

Aye! there are those that think they shall
appear

The whiter that their hands uncover
vice—

A practice that to some is *sweetly* dear,
Because—see you—it makes *them* seem
—*so* nice!

Ah! they are of the sort, as one has found,
Who wears an *outer* garment that looks
clean—

But search not out their footprints on the
ground—

We warn you—*these had better not be*
seen!

* This is said of the same poems that another critic declared "reeked with slander."

POSTSCRIPT.

SING ON! SING ON!

(As we were finishing the foregoing verses, a thrush was singing on some trees in our neighbourhood as jubilantly as though it were spring-time, instead of only three days before Christmas !)

AYE! through all months in this sweet world of firs

And birches, do ye sing — ye happy thrushes!

No other sound the gentle silence stirs
Save chirps of robins from our *bare* rose-bushes!

Not, *only*, are thy clear notes kept for spring,

And for the sunnier hours of toiling men—

But in the sombre winter dost thou sing—
Thou—and the cheerful robin—and pert wren!

Ye sit on these same boughs of graceful birches

All seasons—nothing thy glad notes can stay—

Not even the merry bells of stately churches,

That ring their silvery chimes through many a day!—

Though there be, sometimes storms upon the air,

And breaking billows far and wide are heard,

Thou art but silent until skies are fair,
Until, by west winds, are our flower-leaves stirred!—

O happy thrushes!—none disturb ye here—

To us the cruel bird-thief is unknown—
Neither the sportsman's arrows need ye fear—

Sing on! sing on! this realm is all your own!

DARKEST BEFORE DAWN, AND OTHER POEMS.

"I meditate on Thee in the Watches of the Night."—Psalm lxxiii. 6.

INTRODUCTION.

THE moon looked softly down upon the water,

And wood and valley, as Earth's son and daughter

Stood watching by the tide, with thoughtful eyes

Uplifted to the glow of evening skies!

Watching with no impatience for the tide,
Content if they on earth might never part—

Nor grief, nor death might e'er their steps divide,

Nor anger ever wring each loving heart.

So kept they the calm "Watches of the Night"—

Fearing no storms, as walking, hand in hand,

Looking still forward to the coming light,

Their shadows, linked, behind them on the sand!

DARKEST BEFORE DAWN.

DARKEST—before dawn! the silent gloom

That broods on earth before the sun shall rise,

Is often the fore-shadow of the tomb,
Before the soul shall flit to other skies.

DARKEST before dawn!—yes! even that blow

That strikes us prone and helpless to the ground

Special note by the Authoress.—These reflections and prayers must be read as the collected thoughts of many years, evoked by a variety of causes and circumstances at very different dates.

May be but the precursor of the glow
That afterwards shall every path surround.

DARKEST before dawn! that heavy gloom
That seems to dull the brain and tire
the heart,

May pass away and leave a world of bloom,
From whence the shadows of the earth
depart.

DARKEST before dawn! the blow of fate
May even be the light of Heaven's own
skies—

May be the hand that opens His fair gate,
To view the glory of a new sunrise!

DARKEST before dawn! yes—Death may
lay

His heavy hand upon our drooping head,
Only to bring the dawning of that day
When Light Eternal in our eyes is shed!

THROUGH THE SHADOWS—

YES—through the shadows came a weary
moan,

Now faint—now swelling like an angry
blast—

And listening sadly, as I stood alone,
I thought I heard the voices of the Past!

O dreams of vanished hopes!—of joys no
more!

Fair as the harebells in the moonlight
shaken—

Would that some angel touch could but
restore,

Would that some angel voice might but
awaken!

Now is the sobbing of a wild despair!

The awful blasphemy of souls astray!
They pass out recklessly upon the air,
And then are lost, or—hopeless—die
away.

Be calm, ye voices! sleep amongst the
flowers,

Or send to desert breezes thy sad sighs—
Look forward to the dawn of happier
hours—

Look forward to the breath of sweeter
skies.

Yes! ofttimes it is darkest before dawn—
And flowers spring brightly from the
graveyard sod,

The night is ever followed by the morn,
And storms are conquered by the smile
of God!

ACROSS THE WATERS—

A PAST VISION.

ACROSS the waters of a stormy sea,
There came a vessel, sailing for the
shore—

Nor seemed there any life on board, to
me,

Nor heard I any sound of voice, or oar.

And, as the evening skies grew calm and
clear,

Propelled by some mysterious, unseen
Hand,

Nearer that vessel floated and more near,
To bear my soul unto the Better Land.

At first—not later—felt I fear and dread!
Then stretched my trembling hands to
Heaven, and cried—

Father! now I remember Thou hast said—
Blessed are they that, fearing Thee,
have died!

Even then the vessel seemed becalmed,
nor sailed

It nearer to the shore — a mist-like
shroud

Its many lofty masts and pennants
veiled,—

And later on the winds blew cold and
loud—

And where it went I know not—for awhile
I closed mine eyes—then looking, it was

gone—

And in its place a thick and heavy pile
Of vapour rested on the waves alone!

THE BETTER LAND.

THAT Land that shall be filled, if one by
one,

By all the tender forms once planted
here—

There ever spread beneath a brighter
sun,
Untouched by Death's grim hand, nor
moved by fear!

Aye! day by day, for us, is earth bereft
Of all the hues that brightened it at
morn—
Until to some, but flowerless paths are
left—
Until to some, but dreary skies will
dawn.

New buds, perchance, may open, ere the
close
Of day, yet unlike those of earlier
years—
And blossoms that are sweet, and yet not
those
We tended once, with smiles and hopes
and tears!

Oh! those—once watched with loving,
anxious eyes—
Oh! those—once watered with such
tender hands,
May yet unfold, under far fairer skies,
Then bloom for ever—in immortal
lands!

IN THE "NIGHT-WATCHES."

In the "Night-Watches" do I think of
Thee,
O mighty God!—as the calm hours go
by
Thy glory in the circling stars I see,
And in the moon that lights the silent
sky—

I think, then, of the great works of Thy
Hand—
The living things that walk, that fly,
that creep—
The countless fruits that ripen on Thy
land,
The water-plants that blossom in Thy
deep—

Aye! so of all the bitterness of strife
That evermore disfigures earthly
plains—

The mystery of pain, the griefs of Life,
The poison that flows often through her
veins—

Of human wickedness—so ever strong,
So ever eager in unseemly fight—
Aye—in the wars that now have been so
long
And so triumphant—both by noon and
night—

And deem it is but wisdom to admit
Thy secrets, in this passing life of ours,
May not be fathomed by our little wit,
But lie outside our knowledge and our
powers!

NOT ALL ARE STRONG ENOUGH, O HEAVEN!

Not all are strong enough, O Heaven!
to keep
A faith, of now so many centuries old—
The souls of some are sunk in sluggish
sleep,
And Heaven is as a tale too often told.

They call it useless to uplift their eyes,
And strain into the distant, voiceless
blue—
The future, if not framed of wildest lies,
Is as a vision far beyond their view!

"Faith" is to some impossible!—their
brains
The power of "staying" need—some
more, some less—
To muse on the unseen but overstrains
The poor enfeebled nerves that they
possess!

The giants earth hath known are here no
more—
Some cry, man is a "feeble" being
now!—
Believing little that hath marched before—
The crown of noble faith hath left his
brow—

Yet may it but a cycle be, O God!
A wave of unbelief—to pass away—
An evil weed that holds, awhile, the sod—
But all things have—and shall complete
their day!

AN OLD BOOK.

So old! so strange!—men treat it as a dream,
Of which the very records now are cold—
Yea! as a fairy tale some say they seem—
A story, once again too often told!

The stars may shine upon our up-turned face—
But they reveal no secret to our eyes—
They silently move on in boundless space,
And keep the mighty record of the skies.

We listen, but, alas! no voice we hear—
Only the world's fierce footsteps in the race—

We have forgotten both respect and fear,
And, mocking, look up into boundless space

God knows, what know His creatures not,
the hour
When there shall be wild gnashing of the teeth—
When headstrong earth lies trembling in
His power—
His mighty hand above us and beneath—

Ah! God! the just, the powerful, the bright!
Ah! God! our terror! and Life's over-
strain!—
The first o'erpowering brilliance of Thy
Light—
The thoughts that lie beyond our mortal
brain!—

"SOME NEW THING!"

So cried the Greek of old—still—"Some
new thing,"
To please the triflers—fill earth's idle
hours—
The past is but a dream, — to which men
cling
Only with weakened brains — enfeebled
powers.

"Yes! 'some new thing!' past legends
are too stale,
Too foolish—save, alone—the very last!

Who does not weary of the oft-told tale,
Though it be of the heroes of the past?

"Pah! the mad worship of a barbarous
God!

The old religion of the ancient Greek!—
The silly pilgrimage our fathers trod;—
It is a *new* Religion that we seek!

"Again *another* Christ—not Him of old—
Whose creed shall, at the least, less irk-
some seem!—

Ours is, we say, that tale too often told,
And wearisome, and fading as a dream!

"The dead are buried—let them rest in
peace—

The voices of the older faiths are
dumb—

Break the worn chain — let old-world
preaching cease—

We wait the newer cycle—yet to come!"

O God!—the peoples of these modern
times

Are still the same stiff-necked and foolish
race!

History repeats her follies—errors—
crimes—

And we require still—pardon—pity—
grace!

THE FINISH OF HIS RACE IS
THINE—O GOD!

THAT "new thing" is not Man!—that
strange creation—

That mixture of the sinner and the
saint—

Now led by sense—now by infatuation—
Now needing even Bedlam's strong
restraint!

Now — restless and defiant — fierce and
strong,

Yet how unstable—failing to excel—

In one thing rarely ever constant,—long—
This is the tale the old world still shall
tell!

Noble and proud—yet failing in the race,
Oft-times from want of strength, or
strength's abuse—

Made after Thee—O God! and full of
grace—

With powers too often put to cruel use!

The wildest mixture! giving up his life
For one he deeply loves; now strong and
true—

Now plunging into evil wars and strife—
Ah!—but the tale is neither strange, nor
new!

Through countless years this race hath
mortal run—

Through countless years his myriad foot-
paths trod

From the first rising to the setting sun—
The finish of his race is Thine—O God!

REALMS OF DOUBT.

EVEN as another day on earth was done,
He wandered towards the setting of the
sun,

Until the shadows deepened, and the
gloom

Seemed like the hopeless darkness of the
tomb.

"Can it be true"—he sighed—"as some
have said—

There is no resurrection of the dead?
Must man, most wise of all created things,
Hear not the quiver of an angel's wings?

"Shall men but perish as the beasts, for
they

Know not the dawning of another day—
And live but to the closing-in of night—
Live with no faith in a returning light?

"And shall he look on Heaven as some
wild dream,

And Immortality a poet's theme,
A poet's fancy—and of worth no more
Than mists of vales, or morning's frosted
hoar?

"To vanish—as he holds—beneath the
sun

Of Truth—a race to enter—never won!
A ghost that in the light of day shall fade,
Flowers of a season—dying with the
shade!

"To perish, as the seedlings — as the
beast,

No! unto me the *faith* is strong, at least,
That man is made of other, nobler clay,
And hath a higher destiny than they!"

"WISDOM—THAT IS FOOLISHNESS!"

THOU, in the days of "long ago" fore-
told

Of "wisdom" that is "foolishness" to
Thee!

O God! yet in these days—both new *and*
old,

Its darkness veils the hills, the plain—
the sea.

For man, where'er his steps seem strong,
esteems

Himself of power to judge both Heaven
and Hell—

He calls the history of the past but
dreams—

Life's secrets, if *he* knows not, *none*
can tell!

He can believe that nothing lies beyond
The boundaries that *he* hath circum-
scribed—

Reviews the unknown only to despond,
And at its glimpses hath but mocked and
gibed.

And yet of mysteries he hath solved but
few

Of even those around his narrow
spheres—

Even things of earth lie stretched beyond
his view,

The sea hath murmurs far beyond *his*
ears!

Oh! with Life's myriad secrets yet unread,
How should he see into the far-off skies!

How should he learn the secrets of the
dead—

How should a myriad visions reach his
eyes?

Our knowledge is as limited—finite,
As is our life, whose sequel is
concealed—

And incomplete as is the world by night,
When only half its beauties are revealed!

ALL THINGS SERVE SOME GOOD
PURPOSE IN THE END.

OPPRESSED by bitter memories I kneel
Beneath the quiet midnight skies, to
pray
That poisonous vipers may no longer
steal,
O God of mercy!—on my calm, sad
way!

Let them not creep into my fairest flowers,
Or spit their deadly venom on my path—
Let them not seek, in calm and unwatched
hours,
To coil themselves beside my household
hearth—

Far less I fear, O God! the stormy winds,
That tear the tender branches from the
trees,
Far less I dread the lightning flash that
blinds,—
The angry tempests of the raging seas—

Sorrow and pain are Thine, O Heaven!
the lot,
Not seldom, even of Fortune's favoured
wooer—
But there are things that leave an evil
blot
*Less on the wronged than on the evil-
doer.*

Ah!—there are trials, that seem as though
they came
Simply from human error — human
wrong,
And he, whom Heaven's support and help
would claim,
Must needs be patient, faithful, true and
strong.

*All things serve some good purpose in the
end—*

In Heaven is comfort for the pure and
true—
And there may peace and rest and joy
transcend
The tribulation that on earth we knew!

THE "TROUBLERS OF PEACE."

A PRAYER.

GRANT that I may mine enemies forgive,
O God! in the brief time I yet may live—
They that have wronged me for so many
years,
And forced into sad eyes such bitter
tears—

Nor now remember how, by word and
deed,
In a sad hour they made my worn heart
bleed,
And wrung from me, in those embittered
times,
What I had scarcely given to darker
crimes.

And yet they were such mean and common
foes—
That they had troubled little my repose,
Only they seemed so bitterly alert
Through mine own near and dearest ones
to hurt!

Yet, Heaven! even these I must forgive,
but not
Receive them to my heart to sting
again—
For then had life been far too vexed a
lot,
Its days but days of weariness and pain.

The unrepentant, who their sins deny,
Thou hast not said shall be forgiven
here—
And to the hour, O God! in which I die,
Grant such no more may in my path
appear!

A PRAYER.

LET not the serpents crawl into Thy
day—
Let them not cross, O God! my troubled
way
Let neither vipers, nor the spotted toads,
Hide in the corners of mine earthly roads—

Let them not stain, O Heaven — my
twilight path—
Let them coil not beside my household
hearth—
Or, shining only in the cold moonlight,
Steal into mine own couch of rest, at
night!

Let me not, in my pilgrimage, meet those
Whose mocking voice shall trouble my
repose—
Whose evil counsel shall be proffered,
where—
As *once*—it poisoned even the purest air!

The cruel leopard, with its shining spot,
Into Thy presence, Heaven! shall enter
not,
So will I count the hours to come to Thee,
And evermore in peace and safety be.

There shall the sky be clear, not overcast—
There shall no more be enmity's cold
blast—
There shall our dear ones meet us—in that
rest
That in Thy presence shall be ever
blessed!

BE THOU OUTSPOKEN.

BE thou outspoken — brave — God, only,
fear—
Straightforward — steadfast — then will
men receive
Thy words without suspicion's troubled
ear,
Their hearts and souls both open, to
believe!

Candour will help the world in fullest
measure—
Not an oppressive virtue in this age!
Words said in calmest and abundant
leisure,
Not uttered ever in hot haste, or rage!

Truth even unpalatable—sweetly said,
With an untroubled breath and cool,
calm eyes—
Kindly—persuasive—strong, and gently-
bred,
Shall give her full assistance to the
wise.

Yet is she often but unjustly used!
Called to account for follies not her
own!—
Yet have her counsels often been abused—
Or clothed in some uncomely, ill-shaped
gown!

Truth's counsels farthest sink into the
soul,
When spoken in an accent sweet and
clear;
Uttered in tones strong—full of self-
control,
They linger longest on the listener's
ear.

GOD ONLY AND NOT MAN.

GOD only, and not man, can judge man's
foes,
Though he were of a patient mind and
wise—
Thine enemies may deal their hardest
blows,
Wearing misleading veils before their
eyes.

Or there may be a mist upon the glass,
Through which life's passing scenes man
may review,—
And as successive lights and shadows pass,
We see not always which are false,
which true.

For in the very brain that God hath made,
Much may be hidden yet from human
thought—
By "half-lights," man too often is be-
trayed,
And even fresh Knowledge may be
dearly bought.

Thou can'st not tell the hour when foes
shall come,
And sit as friends beside thy household
hearth—
Bring their foul breath into thy pure,
sweet home,
And plant vile seeds beside thy fairest
path.

Only this duty still is our's—avoid
The sinner—judge not; but yet keep
apart

From him who gladly had thy life
destroyed,
And, in most trusted hours, hath stabbed
thy heart!

REBUKES TO A MOURNER.

DESPONDENT soul, why rest not that sad
gaze,
At times, at least, upon Life's sweeter
skies?

Nor *always*, on the shadows of our ways,
Bend thy too weary, discontented eyes?

Muse rather on those spirits of our times,
That History has shown are true and
brave—

Not *always* on the follies and the crimes,
That follow some dark spirits to the
grave!

Think of the lesson of each passing hour
Not *always* bitter! listen to the bird,
The bee—and mark the glory and the
power,
The voice of grandeur in the tempest
heard.

Think of the mercy of the God Who
gave
The fruits, of which the earth can
boast such store—

Watch the soft rippling of the ocean
wave,
What time the tempest's troubled hours
are o'er.

Ponder on these, and less upon the
gloom—
Hear sometimes the sweet songs of joy
and mirth—

Ponder but sagely on the sufferer's doom,
And think of the glad fairness of the
earth.

Shadow and Light alternate — he doth
wrong

Who passes o'er this truth as it were
nought—

Far better that his trust in it were strong,
For it is one that Heaven Himself hath
taught.

THE REFLECTIONS OF ONE EXPERIENCED.

It cannot be that thou hast done, on earth
Thy duty, yet hast made no bitter foes!
*Thy acts must pass indeed for little worth
If neither spite nor envy hence arose.*

To bring war and not peace shall be the
fate

Of all who walk not in the beaten
paths—

To breed sharp envy, malice, spite, and
hate,

To sow dissension by Life's household
hearths—

See only that thy lance of gold is made—
So that no wound unhealthy it shall
cause—

See that no *honest* friendship is betrayed,
Nor be thy weapons used for vulgar
wars—

Let thy strong storms be Heaven's own
healthy breath,

Aye! even the fresh cold that the north
wind yields,

Sweeping away the sickly mists of death,
And letting new life spring upon the
fields.

Fill not life's atmosphere with vain com-
plaints,

He who so doeth hath no heart to fight—
And when the struggle comes his poor soul
faints,

One breath of wind dispels its feeble
light!

THE CRY OF THE SICK.

YET another day and another night is
passed—

And each of its weary moments as the
last—

Oh! hours of weariness—Oh! hours of
pain—

Will your dull and sad events change not
again?

Shall the sun to-morrow rise and set once
more,
And the stars and the silver moon shine as
before—

Yet another day and another night is
passed—
And each of its weary moments as the
last!—

I hear the break of the waves on a far-off
shore,
And the same sea-birds seem ever flying
o'er,
And the sadness of my life—it changeth
not—
Nor the sickly colour of my dreary lot—

Yet another day and another night is
passed—
And each of its weary moments as the
last!—

And the bells ring out, as another year
rolls by—
As a smile to some and to others as a
sigh—
And the work of the world to me is but
as dreams,
As the toil of another sphere it almost
seems—

Yet another day and another night is
passed—
And each of its weary moments as the
last!—

Ah! must it still be so till the end shall
come—
Shall I never follow the beat of a stirring
drum—
And feel the strength of my feet and
power of hand—
And give, or follow, a tone of strong
command?

Yet another day and another night is
passed—
And each of its weary moments as the
last!—

Oh, for a life of health and strength
below—
For the joys that a feeble life can never
know—

Oh, for the breath of the purer mountain
air,
For the step that cares not how it goes—
nor where.

Yet another day and another night is
passed—
And each of its weary moments as the
last!—

I lie in silence, all through the slow-paced
night,
I pray for the dawn and then for the
dying light—
I add to the "gone before" each moment
passed,
I pray for the next—and *pray it is the
last!*

WAIT AND THE HOUR MAY COME
WHEN THERE IS LIGHT;

OR,

PATIENCE AND TRUST.

Once—I dared pray "Ah, Heaven! that I
were dead!
I taste of earth only its harsher bread"—
All things around me seemed but full of
gloom—
Or chilled by the near shadow of the
tomb!

Why do we groan and battle through our
days—
And fight with death—whose grim form
bars our ways?
Why do we sour our meat with bitter
tears—
Yet meanly pray Heaven to increase our
years!

We are a giddy race—foolhardy—strong—
And yet more weak!—more blinded to
the wrong
Where most we plume ourselves on
wisdom—power—
And right;—and so we "strut our little
hour!"

We look up to the sweet fruits o'er our
head—
We picture life — with all such riches
spread—

We watch them ripen — day succeeding
day—
Alas! the storms! that tear them all
away!

Patience and Trust—should be our watch-
words here!
Drive out all coward doubt — all paltry
fear!
Wait! and the dawn will follow after
night—
Wait! and the hour may come when there
is—Light!

DESPONDENT MOMENTS.

GOD help me!—sometimes in the saddened
night,
I am so weightied with the griefs of
years,
That I would fain not see the morning
light,
Knowing it could but break through
storms of tears—

Life seemeth then so dreary and so
long,
So crossed by paths that are perplexed,
or sad,
The race of joy seems only to the
strong,
The crowns of earth seem only for the
glad.

So full of pale delusions—hopes no more
Wearing the giddy colours of the past—
Of withered flowers no season can restore,
Of fruits unripened, falling with the
blast—

So marked by countless little graves and
tombs,
Receptacles of all we held most sweet,
Of rotted fruits, and of dry, dusty blooms,
All trampled on by hard and careless
feet—

Yes! marked by all we prayed might here
escape
The bitter and the everlasting doom,
The shadows of eternity that drape
To our despair, the pale, unflowered
tomb.

AGAIN—NIGHT THOUGHTS— OF ONE SICK.

OH! for a life of health and strength
below—
For the warriors brave, that no mean path
shall know—
Oh! for the breeze and brace of the
mountain air,
For a sound that is not dulled by Life's
despair—

I listen—and listen long, with a wearied
ear,
For a voice that may to the others bring
but fear—
To a voice from Heaven—the voice of my
release—
'Tis the only voice that I thought could
bring me peace!

And as the stars o'er the clear Heaven
slowly move—
I sometimes watch for the face, for the
form I love—
For the longing arms stretched out from
the silent sky,
Till I veil my face once more with a weary
sigh.

Yet still will I lose not hope—and still
await,—
Though the hours of my sojourn grow
more dark and late—
For the time to come when my power
shall be more strong
To open the gate that hath been closed
so long.

NO, LOVE! I FEAR NOT DEATH—

No, love! I fear not death, yet greatly
fear
To leave thee lonely—O mine own—
for this
I dread, since I of all to thee am dear,
In kissing me thou givest Love's last
kiss.

And thou wilt miss me under winter skies,
When blighting snow is lying on the
lea—

And thou can'st meet no more mine answering eyes—
Their light is lost upon this earth to thee!

And thou wilt need me in the summer days,

Yes! thou wilt ask for me at eventide,
And looking! — nothing, love, will meet thy gaze—

And feeling—nothing, love, is at thy side!

Ah, love! not long may'st thou be desolate—

Thy faithful soul shall in its season soar
Into the realms where I shall ever wait
To rest upon thy heart for ever more.

It must be God's own time, beloved, we know—

Yet, dearest, it may not be over long
Ere thou wilt leave thy weary life below,
Called by the sound of Heaven's celestial song.

AH! GOD OF MERCY—I AM
FREE!

(See pp. 23 and 24.)

THOU hast been my companion many years,

O Pain! thy left hand pressing on my heart—

Thou wert regardless of my griefs and tears—

Thy right hand ever ready with thy dart—

Thou wert with me through the long hours of night—

Bending as a dark shadow from the skies—

And when I sought to see the pale starlight,

A mask of iron was laid upon mine eyes—

And when I strove to think—my thoughts would stray

Into strange regions, filled with ghastly shapes—

As one who strains to find a sweeter way,
But only by the gate of death escapes—

And if I sought to pray—my tongue would cleave

Even to my mouth, *for thou wert standing by—*

Nor yet my moaning bed-side would'st thou leave,

Nor even let thy weary captive die—

So did I wait and weep, as time went past,

I seemed to have as friends *but one—*
and Thee!

Ah, God of Mercy, I am calm at last—

Thy Hands my bonds have broken—I am free!

I LOOK UP VAINLY—

I LOOK up vainly for Thy guiding light,
And pain and doubt beset my weary way,

I see before me but the coming night,
The earth is fading and the skies are grey—

Ill shapes, grim forms, bewilder now my sight,

My heart is filled by anxious thoughts and fears—

My steps are watched by cruel hate and spite,

Mine eyes are blinded often by my tears—

Voices of bitterness are in the air,

And shapes surround me that seem full of greed—

Nothing I do in their sight seemeth fair,
They mock me that my feet are torn, and bleed.

They view mine anguish only through their scorn,

And deem my very faintness that of shame—

And when my garments from my flesh are torn,

They only seek to crush me with fierce blame—

Yet see I light upon my way—at last!

The voice of peace I hear upon my track—

The hardest troubles of my soul are
passed,

The evil shadows now are driven back—

Light on the mountain—light upon the
land!

Light glowing once more, though from
evening skies—

The soft touch of a kind and soothing
hand,

The faithful, restful gaze of loving eyes!

AND—AS MINE EYES GREW CLEARER—

AND, as mine eyes grew clearer I saw one
Whose hand had ever sought death's
way to bar—

Whose face seemed sometimes clearer than
the sun,

But then again seemed indistinct and
far—

Yet mutely he returned, to fight that
fight!—

And if he in the day looked somewhat
dim,

Still—in the dark and anguished hours of
night

I looked—*nor ever looked in vain—for
him!*

Then felt I on my brow his soothing hand,
And the blood calmed in my disordered
veins—

Then softer shadows seemed to veil the
land,

The scent of flowers stole o'er the arid
plains—

Then could I sleep and even gently sleep,
Forgetting all the horrors of the day—

Then would my weary eyes forget to weep,
My maddened thoughts no longer went
astray—

Then for a time I rested, and could dream
That I was in a world more fair than
this—

A flowery land—a land of hill and stream,
That realm that, freed from pain, must
need be bliss!

And *he* was there—for what were Heaven
to me

Without those loving eyes—that noble
heart!

Thus, dreaming, would I pray that I were
free

And in a land where *we should never
part!*

I HAVE AWAKENED—

I HAVE awakened from a long, sad sleep,
O God! a sleep of terror and of pain—

In which I heard the sounds of those that
weep,

The murmurs of Life's bitter overstrain—

I have awakened—and not now I hear
The sounds that on mine ears so sadly
fell,

The sounds of ringing anguish and of
fear,

None, whence they came, or wherefore,
now shall tell.

Let them, O God! I pray, be henceforth
still—

Those voices that seemed echoes of
despair—

I could not bear the horror and the chill
Of their returning now in calmer air.

I hear the bird's sweet singing in the
grove,

The voices of the blackbird and the
thrush—

I hear the gentle voice of mine own love,
Ah! grant these never more shall die,
or hush!

O God! that never more such sleep be
mine!

Grant Thou until the hour when I may
die,

That I may calmly watch the sun's decline,
And a new light dawn brightly in Thy
sky!

PATIENCE.

YES! Look on life *with patience to the
end—*

Know—if the wind is fierce the reed shall
bend,

But oft the storm sinks into rest at night,
And river flowers awake to sweeter light.

This world is not a world for unmixed
bliss;

For only some, glad lover's tender kiss;
For only some, fair maiden's pensive sigh;
For only some, a warm, unclouded sky.

Look not upon this life to only weep,—
To watch the ships go down into the
deep—

The tender sheep that die, too early
shorn—

The rose's petals by the east wind torn—

The young birds die within their parent's
nest;

Yet shall we trust that all things are for
best:

So strew the white flowers o'er the graves
we love—

Believing that our loved ones dwell above.

And in the roll of centuries all is well—
And calm descends upon the souls that
trust—

Whose faith shall yet survive the funeral
bell,

Even as the dust of earth returns to dust!

“BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN.”

BLESSED are they that mourn, is yet a creed
That is unknown,—aye! is denied by
some—

What unto them are the sore hearts that
bleed,—

The voice of tenderness in them is dumb.

Blessed are ye that mourn—and much of
grief

Shall be the portion of all nobler
hearts—

And yet the years of earth are far too brief,
For purifying from its poisoned parts—

Through suffering comes perfection—he
that knows

No throb of anguish for another's pain,
Who ne'er is saddened by his brother's
woes,

Shall hardly much from earthly travail
gain!

The soul wrapt in itself and its small joy,
That laughs .because, to-morrow it may
die,

The griefs of others could not well destroy,
Or touch with sadness either lip, or eye.

No man his vessel without *care* shall steer,
Or without guidance of a master-hand—
Life is an ocean of much tempest here,
And but a voyage to a sweeter land!

HEAVEN ONLY CAN PROTECT THEE.

To many spirits, evil and accursed,
Are given the paths of life, by Heaven's
own law,

And some amongst these—sinners of the
worst—

Do hold *the name* of no true man in
awe!

It is the one possession most man's own!—
Yet one his foes with scarce a thought,
will steal—

They might disdain to rob him of a *bone*,
Yet no compunction for *this* theft they
feel!

And there are some, nor of the worst are
they,

Who simply try to help themselves—of
those

Who live to lead a thoughtless, sunny way,
And care but little, or for friends, or
foes.

Then there are those whose very trade is
slander,

Who seem to have but little other aim
Than to a vile, degrading taste to pander,
Nor even blush to find a falsehood's
fame!

And there are those who slander less from
hate—

(The hardest hearts for charity to
reach)—

Than from some envy of another's state—
Of glories that may be beyond *their*
reach!

Thou can'st not shame them, though you
shall expose
Their falsehoods to a thousand curious
ears—
They are through life the good man's
worst of foes,
Of whom even Innocence herself hath
fears!

Heaven only can protect thee—there be
none
More subtle than are these in ways of
spite—
That sometimes crawl unnoticed by the
sun,
But oftener skulk in shadows of the
night.

TO A CALUMNIATOR OF THE DEAD!

OH! if thou can'st not speak well of the
dead
It might be sometimes well that voice
were still!
No word of falsehood ever need be said,
Yet harm comes from thy constant tales
of ill!

The dead go where they will be judged,
and we
Are stamped with vile conceit and pride,
to deem
We gauge the depth of all we hear and
see,
As if all things in life are what they
seem!

Thou may'st condemn the sin, but not the
sinner,
Thou may'st be eager to proclaim the
cost,
Yet man may even know himself the
winner
While thou, poor fool, proclaim his
cause as lost!

Not *thou* the secrets of the mind can'st
read—
Not *thou* the triumphs of the soul can'st
weigh—
Thou can'st not tell what hearts in silence
bleed,
Nor yet what lips may curse, what lips
may pray.

What may have caused thee only urgent
fears,
What may have seemed to thee but
foolish ways
May seem, in Heaven, the noblest of
careers,
And such as angel voices bless and
praise!

O GOD! THAT IN A LIFE SO PASSING BRIEF.

O GOD! that in a life so passing brief,
In which our anxious foresight oft is
vain—
Thy creatures live a life so full of grief,
So marked by anxious toil and over-
strain—

Alas! the doubts that fill man with
despair,
The doubts by which the bravest are
distressed,
Leave him but little time for thought, or
prayer—
But little time in which the soul finds
rest.

Life's colder, harder duties seem to fill
Each moment of his life, year after
year—
His path lies up a steep and stony hill,
His fruits grow ripe and fall—his leaves
are sere—

The tombs of early friends around him
spread,
He seeth sadly how the passing hours
Add to the crowd of the beloved dead—
Whose graves he strews with swiftly-
fading flowers—

So roll Thy years, O God! nor comes there
Peace—
Thy lessons last to the mysterious End—
Grief, turmoil, pain, and war shall never
cease—
And death, at last, appears our truest
friend.

SO IS IT RULED.

So is it ruled—man hath but little time
To learn his lessons on this earthly
soil—

Sometimes, alas! to darken it with crime,
 Sometimes to lighten its hard hours of
 toil—

He who is bravest shall have little fear—
 Ere long the heavy shadows may
 depart—

The wild winds calm—the heavens grow
 fair and clear—

Peace cometh to his brow, rest to his
 heart—

Truth, strong and clear, and full of self-
 control,

Falls with persuasive accent on his ear—
 Sinks deeply, earnestly into the soul,
 Its duties, its rebukes, alike are clear.

Yet Truth—even Truth—the simple, strong
 and wise,

Will sometimes use the tones that but
 disgust—

Will sometimes show in such distasteful
 guise!

Man strikes it down to slumber with his
 dust!

The fairest gem needs cleanliness and
 brightness

Ere it wins favour in the sweetest eyes—
 Yet even honour, courage, and uprightness
 Have worn, alas! the very mask of
 lies!

MAN—WITH HIS SINS—

MAN—with the sins that need so much of
 leaven,

Is yet the work of Thine own hand, O
 Heaven!

From Thee he came, and lastly—unto
 Thee

Returns—created for Eternity.

Yet Thou hast also, on his pathway
 showered

A thousand gifts, to beautify his road—
 With light, by day and night, his world
 hast dowered,

And love and glory on his powers
 bestowed!

Yet dares man sometimes to fling back,
 with scorn,

The thousand gracious joys that Thou
 hast lent—

And craves Thy help, neither by night,
 nor morn,

And all Thy works he views with dis-
 content!

Thou well might weary, O Thou patient
 God!

Of the strange vagaries of this stiff-
 necked race—

Oh! strike Thou not yet with Thy lightning
 rod—

But grant us yet a *little longer grace!*

That time for penitence shall yet arrive—
 A time when shall be opened blinded
 eyes—

And man, as years roll o'er him, yet shall
 strive

For further light and guidance ere he
 dies!

ONCE MORE—PATIENCE.

GOD of the stormy sky, the restless sea,
 There is no virtue more direct *from Thee*,
 And *of Thee*—than is Patience!—Patience
 —still

And calm—not loud—though resolute of
 will.

Yet Patience—the courageous, true and
 strong,

But rarely dwelleth by our earthly
 paths—

Only through an experience, both hard
 and long—

And often cruel—her lessons reach our
 hearths!

Oh! yet the noblest, from our trouble
 springs,

And are of bitter pain and sorrow
 born!

Yes! when the saddest grief our bosom
 wrings,

And when our heart by treachery is
 torn—

She blooms as a sweet flower upon the earth—
 Though unto many of the world unknown—

For ever of unchanging, priceless worth,
 As thou wilt find if she becomes thine own!

Go! cherish her far more than all thy gold,
 A gem beyond all others life can boast,—

Her value is of diamonds untold,
 When nearly lost—*then to be prized the most!*

THE MYSTERY OF OUR CREATOR.

I STOOD, one night, to watch the rising tide,
 The world of waters that around me spread—

I thought upon that universe so wide,
 With all its myriad living — myriad dead—

I thought upon the conflicts and the wars,
 That fill our human life with so much pain—

Of all its sins, and of God's outraged laws,
 Of rolling years whose burden seems so vain—

Of all the many grievances of earth,
 Of those that seem as only born to weep—

And sadly mused upon life's little worth,
 How all must sleep, at last, the same long sleep—

I thought how silent seemed Thy voice,
 O God!
 These many centuries as they onward rolled—

Until the creatures, sprung from Thine own sod,
 Begin to feel their faith and hopes grow cold—

I pondered greatly why *no more* evolves
 From earth's long centuries of human dust—

*Yet felt that still the stronger soul
 resolves
 To hold his faith and live his life in
 trust—*

Nor have we, of unstable brain, the right
 To judge Thy mighty and mysterious plan—

Thou art above — we dwell below, in night,—

Thou art Immortal—we, Thy creature—
 Man!

WASTED PLEADING.

OH! plead thou not to him, whose feeble eyes

No pure and lofty truths can recognise
 In those long centuries old, those noble pages,

Whose records have sustained the soul for ages!

For, as we know, are many WEAK!—who fail

To see God's mighty work on His own earth—

To whom past histories now are dim and pale—

Are fables, or but signs—of shallow worth.

And in this world, we also know, are those

Who cry that man but springs from
 “germs of moss!!”

That Death eternally the scene shall close,
 Whereby he knoweth nothing of his loss!

“Therefore it matters little, see you not?”—

They cry “from whence man came and how descended!

We have but here to mind our daily lot,
 For with the hand of Death are all things ended!”

Sometimes one's soul feels hopeless! yet *may* come

Hours when the voice of Folly shall be dumb—

When human egotism and conceit
 Bow their mean heads and grovel at Heaven's feet!

A REBUKE FOR DISCONTENT.

WHY dost thou murmur—O thou weary
soul,
Beneath the planets' everlasting roll?
Thy very life is even as a spark—
A meteor—passing through the endless
dark!

Why dost thou sigh and raise imploring
hands—
And looking down upon Earth's smiling
lands—
So stained, despite its smiles, with grief,
with crime—
Yet sigh to linger—*but* a little time?

Why dost thou beat thine arms upon thy
breast,
As though desiring labour, and not rest?
And pray the past to be recalled—again
To bring back *days* of pleasure—*years* of
pain?

Why should the treasures, ever round thee
spread—
The glories here — above — beneath — thy
tread,
Left hitherto scarce noticed at thy feet
Yet—as thou leavest them—appear so
sweet?

Scenes thou had'st but regarded, in the
morn,
With something of contempt, if not with
scorn,
Now Death approaches thee in robes of
night,
Thine eyes can view with even a strange
delight!

Go to thy closet—meditate and pray!
Rejoicing in the near approach of day—
When all the anguish of this life is
o'er—
When grief, or guilt, shall trouble thee no
more!

THEREFORE BE PATIENT!

EVEN as the moon sank on the sea one
night,—
Beside the flinty shore, by paths un-
kind,

Guided but faintly by the failing light,
A lonely wanderer went—a home to find.

Alas! thou weary one—the world is cold!
A world to whose bright gifts thou hast
no claim—
Thou hast no place within the human fold,
There is for thee nor kindred—friend—
nor name—

Thy early ways, they cried, were full of
sin!
And now—forsaken—thou may'st well
be sad!
Thy dream was, that the wise alone could
win,
The wealthy, only, in this world were
glad!

It may be that the path that winds before
thee,
With rudest stones bestrewed upon the
ground,
The very same pale moonlight, shining o'er
thee,
Lights some fair home to which thy
steps are bound.

Therefore, be patient! for those stars that
shine
Upon a throne, light also thy dull path—
And there are sadder hearts than even
thine,
That sit and weep beside an empty
hearth!

And man may leave and mock thee, but
thy God
The *penitent* forgives! and thou may'st
yet
Forsake those paths that once thy foot-
steps trod
For those that lead thee to a bright
sunset!

A CITY MORNING.

FROM close, foul courts and from dim,
twilight alleys
Pale children pour forth to the broader
street—
The life of need, of human struggle rallies,
Once more its stern and gaunt demands
to meet.

While through the mosses of the forest
glades,
The streamlet shimmers in the growing
light,
And tender violets, in the greenwood
shades,
Shake off the sparkling dew-drops of the
night—

The birds, awakening in their calm re-
treats,
Sing their glad morning *feans* to the
sun—
A thousand little sounds and myriad
sweets,
Speak to us of earth's newer life begun,

And some will greet it with the arms of
power,
And some with hearts of strength,—or
hearts of brass,
Some—and not few—awaken to the hour
To pray to Heaven *that it once more*
shall pass!

Yet—from dull homes of men the voice of
prayer
May reach a listening Heaven, though it
shall come
Clogged by the City's dull and stagnant
air,
And through the City's ever-busy hum.

HOW LONG, O LORD?—I.

How long wilt Thou look down on earth?
How long,
O God! shall darkness veil Thy coming
day?
Our ears hear ever the triumphant song
Of sinners—marching swiftly on their
way!

How long wilt Thou look down on earth
—how long
Let laurel leaves adorn the brow of sin,
And see the race for ever to the strong—
While Greed the prizes of this earth
shall win!

How long wilt Thou look down on earth—
how long
Shall all Thy hills the feet of evil scale—

And glory's shining crown be one of
Wrong—
And Rapine evermore repeat her tale?

How long wilt Thou look down on earth—
how long
Ere Thy strong lance of justice shall be
hurled—
And we no more may see the eager throng
That crowd the darker pathways of this
world?

How long wilt Thou look down on earth—
how long
Shall yet the advent of that cycle be
When earth shall hear but the triumphant
song
Of peoples marching on the road to
Thee?

HOW LONG, O LORD?—II.

How long wilt Thou look down on evil,
still?
We call to Thee, O Heaven! without
reply—
Thy universe the steps of misery fill,
And yet—we hear no answer to our
cry!

Some say—this world is darker than the
Old,
The power of righteousness is but a
dream—
The good are feeble — and the vicious
bold—
That little the dark clouds of life re-
deem.

The Lion that devoureth croucheth near,
Bold Death still throws as cruelly his
dart—
The deadly vipers that still more we fear,
Infest the homes of Man and sting his
heart.

Unwholesome mists still rise from many
plains—
That brightly smile beneath the sun-
light's glow—
To mar their beauty with their hateful
stains,
Nor spare the lamb, with its fair fleece
of snow.

How long wilt Thou look down on evil—
still

We cry to Thee, O Heaven! without
reply—

Thy universe the steps of misery fill,

Ah, yet!—we hear no answer to our
cry!

HEAR THOU OUR PRAYER—

HEAR Thou our prayer—O God of mercy
—Thou

Art still so far from earth—so far away—
All power is Thine; and though we know
not how,

Yet Satan's reign seems stronger than
Thy sway!

Is it our folly—or is it our sin?

Or is it our sad feebleness of brains—
That something Satan claims to have of
kin,

To so much passing on our earthly
plains!

Still dwells the Pharisee on earth—the
race

That Thou hast warned against, swarms
now as then—

Though others pass from earthly scenes,
his place

He holdeth still amongst the sons of
men!

Let others fill his homes on earth — O
Heaven!

To draw from man and life more honest
wages!—

A “little leaven the whole lump doth
leaven!”

That leaven hath been his for weary
ages.

Ah! let Thy light, O God! — upon
us rest—

Or in the dark let us Thy presence
know—

Give Thou Thy gracious help to the
oppressed—

To all that weep upon Thy worlds
below!

YEARS AND THEIR TEACHINGS.

I.

HE once was reckless — now is so no
more—

Cared little for the sufferer's bitter
plaint—

Upon the world's gauds set unbounded
store,

Now are their hues but tawdry,—vulgar
—faint.

He once was ignorant—now too well has
learnt,

Full many secrets that had been con-
cealed,

Upon his brow are fiery sorrows burnt,
Life's under-lying sores have been re-
vealed—

Once grieved to see the hearts of men so
hard,

To watch how many footsteps went
astray—

Once startled as the lion, or the pard,
Came slowly through the blossoms by
the way—

Once each long hour seemed almost
months in length,

And each dull month as though it were
a year—

Once he was daunted by his want of
strength,

Now knows he hope and faints no more
with fear.

He once felt wavering; now is firm and
true:

Unhappy, but is now at peace instead;

A purer atmosphere confronts his view,
The holy dawn of Heaven breaks over-
head.

YEARS AND THEIR TEACHINGS.

II.

SHE once was wilful—now she is no
longer

The headstrong being men had known
before.

She once was fickle—now her steps are
stronger,
The lurid skies of earth attract no more.

She once was peevish—often full of wrath,
To schemes of bitterness her mind was
lent;
Now Heaven itself seems shining on her
path,
The world no more her calmer hours
torment.

She once was anxious—but is placid now—
She sees the coming light of fairer
skies—
The scorner's anger troubles not her brow,
She reads their mean thoughts with her
clearer eyes.

Cold words of spite and hatred hurt her
not—
The "wicked flourish as a green bay
tree"

Yet but a little time—the very spot
Once claimed as theirs her eyes no more
can see.

She waits in patience, knowing Life was
meant
Neither for greed, nor for mere selfish
rest—
Rather the plains of Earth to man were
lent,
As "stepping-stones" to realms that
shall be blessed.

YEARS AND THEIR TEACHINGS.

III.

THEY once were ignorant—now too well
they know
Full many secrets heretofore concealed—
The story of Life's fitful, fever-glow,
Ambition's impotence, are both revealed.

The wasted toil that marks this life be-
comes
Even day by day more painfully dis-
cerned—
They hear the empty roll of distant drums,
And other lessons they from Time have
learned.

Once lightly angered—now more calm and
meek

They feel the light of Heaven upon
their ways.

Once strong esteemed — if now men call
them weak—
And yet that blame is better than false
praise!—

Once tears embittered every passing hour,
The bread they ate was tasteless—full of
dust—

The serpent's coil shone in their fairest
bower,
Eyes sparkled round them, full of spite,
or lust.

Once they were feeble—now their steps are
strong;
Unhappy — but they now are glad
instead.

They hear on earth a clearer, sweeter song,
The holy dawn of Heaven breaks over-
head!

A LIFE FOR THE HEREAFTER!

No trouble daunts *his* clear and thoughtful
brow,
But passing onward, with unflinching
tread,

We see him, ever nobly calm as now,
Helping the sick—not wailing o'er the
dead!

There are no empty hours in that full life,
Each moment hath its work and oft its
care,

No waste in vulgar wars, or selfish strife,
Peace—honour—are his watchwords—
rest—his prayer!

No murmur at stern fate his lip escapes,
His place is still to cheer — to not
despond—

Noble his years — the aims of life he
shapes
Not for *this* world but for the *world*
Beyond!

ONE TO ESTEEM!

FREE from self-righteousness—that hateful
sin

That in the paths of some, one sees
abound—

Forgetful of his own mixed troubles, in
Concern for those another's paths sur-
round—

Thinking not ever how much holier — he !
Than that huge multitude around him
spread ;

How saintly must that pathway truly be,
Compared to the mean paths some others
tread !

And spending not the passing hours of
Life

In "showing up" the sins and faults
of others,—

In stirring up the elements of strife—

In proving he is holier than his
brothers—

Nor keeping scrupulously from the way
In which his fellows tread — lest he
should seem

As far from heaven as "certainly are
they" !—

Ever the Pharisee's most cherished
scheme—

Such is not the example he hath taught,
The life that he upon this earth would
lead ;

Self hath not been the pivot of his thought,
Nor yet his standard, idol, hope, or
creed !

TWO MOODS.

No. 1.

STRENGTHENING the hands that help the
sick and sad,

With tender grief that braces, not o'er-
whelms—

Noting the light and not the mists, that
clad

The grander paths that lead to higher
realms

Watching the thoughtful shepherd lead his
sheep

Where they shall find the freshest,
sweetest grass,

Safe from the crushing boulders of the
steep,

Or heavy shadows of the rocky pass—

Marking the rapture of the "panting
hart,"

As by the sparkling brook he rests at
last—

The sun's warm glory, ere his rays depart—

The sweet, soft calm succeeding the
rude blast—

Blessing the peace that after raging war,
Descends upon the worn world's bleed-
ing breast—

The peaceful setting of the evening star,
The waves that settle to a rippling rest—

And numbering, now and then, the gentle
joys

Of Life, the cooing of the placid dove :

Ah ! hearing less the tempests that destroy
Than the sweet notes of mercy and of
love !

TWO MOODS.

No. II.

LOOKING upon the sadness of our hours,
And fearing for the darkness of the
morrow,

Pointing out the sad blight upon our
flowers—

The vice, the wrong—the error and the
sorrow—

Marking the toil, but marking not the rest,
Not the fair streams, but torrents as
they meet—

Noting the clouds that veil the mountain
crest,

But not the sunny pastures at its feet—

Seeing no fair shores bound the seas of
earth,

Only the perils of its rocks of stone—

Closing the ears to ringing tones of mirth,
And waiting for the sufferer's bitter
moan—

Seeing the withered fruit upon the wall,
Not the sweet grapes that ripen on the
plains,

Seeing the beech leaves in the autumn
fall,—

The mildew, not the sweetness, of our
grains—

Seeing the many paths that lead to Hell,
The ruin whereon sin has set her seal—
And listening for the sad, funereal bell,
To drown the echoes of the wedding
peal!

THE HAND OF GOD.

FAIR stars that shine upon us through the
gloom,
Sweet, gracious flowers that blossom on the
tomb,
Ye are as gems of an untrodden shore—
Beacons of lands that no man shall ex-
plore.

There is no spot so sad, but there may be
Some light that shineth on the land, or
sea—
The chamois' bleat, the sea-mew's plain-
tive cry
Shall haunt the loneliest spots beneath the
sky!

The edelweiss blooms on the Alpine steep—
The whale sports in the everlasting deep—
The eagle's scream upon the mountain-
crest
Breaks even Eternity's sublimest rest.

The palm-tree of the desert's welcome
shade
A paradise hath in Sahara made—
The soft-eyed seal is found upon the ice,
Where neither warmth, nor beauty can
entice.

The snake coils in creation's wildest
blocks—
The lion nestles in her rudest rocks—
Sweet waters flow where footsteps few
shall tread—
Gifts that the lavish hand of God hath
spread.

That Hand is seen by eyes most pure and
clear,
Even in the spots most desolate—most
drear—
Nor shall there spot upon this earth be
found,
But that an angel's step hath touched the
ground.

THE WORLD IS RESTING.

THE world is resting from its work
awhile—

So let us wander to some calm retreat,
Above us spreading God's eternal smile,
While flowers of earth smell sweetly at
our feet.

The world is resting, love; nor is it
wrong—

Forgetful of its many cares—to stray
Where we can hear the fitful, parting song
Of birds, that sinks to silence with the
day.

The world is resting, love; now let me
gaze

Into the tender softness of thine eyes,
And we will dream the dream of earlier
days,
Again will whisper—true love never dies.

The world is resting, O my faithful love;
Both on the earth and on the soulless
deep—

The stars shine softly from their place
above,
As the tired universe subsides in sleep.

The world is resting, O my love; again
Shall its worn, weary eyelids softly
close.

Let not the sad and sorrowful complain—
There yet are hours for prayer and for
repose.

A PRAYER.

FATHER above!

On Whom in darkness and in fear we
call,

Withdraw Thou not the radiance of Thy
love,

Let not the shadow of Thine anger fall.

We, of Thy earth
Seem wandering o'er it, even as lost
sheep—

Thy prizes seem to many of small worth,
Darkness broods o'er the earth and o'er
the deep.

To some it seems
 As though Thy glorious smile had been
 withdrawn—
 And little the cold weight of gloom re-
 deems;
 Dim is the moon by night—the sun at
 morn!

Such, in this hour
 See little of the wonders of thy skies—
 Their hands are weak—their feet have lost
 their power—
 Alas! a veil hath fallen o'er their eyes!

Forgive! though they
 Have sinned, yet are their sins those of
 the weak—
 Though they so far, O God! have gone
 astray
 Teach them in mercy, how Thy Throne
 to seek.

Ah! yet forgive!
 Thou—Who hast yet forgiven countless
 years!
 Let not Thy creatures in such darkness
 live;
 Redeem them through their sufferings
 and their tears!

LOVE! LOVE!

LOVE! Love! the air is full of warmth and
 balm—
 Love! Love! the sky, the sea, the earth, is
 calm;
 And in the depth, O Love, of thy calm
 eyes
 Shines the strong faith that changes not,
 nor dies—

Softly the sun goes down into the west—
 Leaving the world to silence and to rest—
 So that I hear, and almost with a start
 The beating of thy true and tender heart.

Ah! Love—is Heaven a realm of such
 sweet peace,
 That songs of angels there shall never
 cease?
 A Kingdom where there may be never
 pain;
 Where noble hearts shall suffer not in
 vain?

Ah, Love! shall we feel then as we feel
 now—
 Shall the same glow irradiate thy brow—
 Will thy lips breathe those words—those
 words so dear—
 That lift my heart above all earthly fear?

Ah, Love! the mystery of the life above!—
 The faith in immortality of love!—
 For me I shall not fear to hear earth's
 knell
 So long as I thus near thy heart shall
 dwell!

IT WAS THY MERCY, O MY GOD—

It was Thy mercy, O my God, to let
 Thy smile at last fall on my troubled
 way,
 Thou seemest in Thy goodness, to forget
 How often I have left the light of day—

How often been by fools and knaves be-
 trayed,
 Through mine own blinded eyes and
 headstrong soul,
 How often into paths of tempests strayed,
 Nor heeded much Thy thunder's warning
 roll—

But waiting till the sound became more
 near,
 And heeding not the lightning's fiercer
 light—
 I followed rashly still mine own career,
 Nor marked the falling shadows of the
 night.

Then came the heavy storm, the blighting
 rain,
 The fitful lightning, the succeeding
 shade—
 The blight of all things, in the seed, or
 grain,
*And I unknowing, into darkness
 strayed.*

Now will I seek Thy path of Life to keep,
 Nor wander from its narrow bounds
 again,
 And follow even in the track of sheep,
 Leaving the wolves behind upon the
 plain.

STILL—AN UNREAD TALE.

AH! God of mercy, yet—Thou God of pain—

Thou unread mystery still, to earth's most wise—

God of the breaking heart, the burning brain—

The deep-lined brow, and the tear-laden eyes—

Alas! the child, that suffers bitter wrong,
Through the mad ignorance of its parent's ways!—

The heavy sickness bearing down the strong—

The shadowed horror of some stainless days—

The cruel suffering for another's folly—

So—seeming—to these purblind eyes of ours—

The sharp, fierce punctures of the crown of holly,

The gathering of the thorns and not of flowers—

Ah! shall men never read Life's Greater book—

Nor ever be to its sealed chambers bidden—

Upon the cabalistic writings look,
But still remain by doubt, by terror chidden?

Dark clouds yet rest upon the mind of man,

His life and death remain an unread tale—

Nor seems it yet in the Creator's plan
To lift the heavy and mysterious veil.

A POET'S THANKS TO HEAVEN.

I THANK Thee, O my God! for that sweet gift

That hath been mine to use, in some bright hours—

That I, while dwelling on this earth, could lift

My soul from earth and see Thy fairer bowers.

For there are times when I leave earth behind,

Forgetful of its melancholy tales

I hear no sounds of war upon the wind,

I see amongst the flowers no viper's trails.

I hear sweet voices, never strung by hate—

I see bright eyes that shimmer not with spite,

Eyes, whose true glance is ever calm and straight—

Eyes full of charity's most holy light.

Then earth no more in darkness lies,—
Sweet airs of holy summer breathe around—

Then Love still gazes into answering eyes,

And I with stainless skies tread Heaven's fair ground!

HE WHOM I LOVE.

HE whom I love hath often fought the fight

Of Death — or even darker, sadder war—

Yet have I known him faithful, as the light

Of yonder calmly - constant evening star!

Are there, can there be many, on Life's plain,

Faithful as he had been, so ever true?

Shall I not meet one of his kind again,

Must constancy and faith be always new—

Yet always old? a thing of deathless bloom,

A dream — and yet no dream to be effaced—

A flower that brightens even the darkest tomb,

That sometimes shines in even a desert's waste.

Love! thou alone hast immortality!
 Thou gift from High, thou ever glorious
 tale!
 True as the sun in Heaven's eternal sky,
 And never lost, although eclipsed, or
 pale!

THE HOUR OF DARKNESS.

AND still my heart is sad, O God! our
 dreams
 Of joy fade in this world as we advance,
 Nor is our path the easy path it seems,
 Dark phantoms in its very windings
 dance.

My heart is sad—the dawn of brighter
 years
 Can pierce not the dark shadows of my
 brow—
 I look but forward through a mist of tears,
 I know no spell the gloom to lighten
 now.

My heart is sad—our eyesight seems more
 clear
 As slowly we advance upon our way,
 The far-off past, alas! becomes too near,
 The gloom but deepens ere it turns to
 day.

My heart is sad—the locks once dark, are
 grey—
 My steps have lost the buoyant spring
 of old—
 The boon of peace is all for which I pray,
 Strength is enfeebled, pleasure's lips are
 cold.

O God!—my heart is sad! in looking back
 Into the shadows of our earlier skies
 We see what stars have fallen from their
 track,
 What suns have set that never more shall
 rise.

I WANDER THROUGH THE WOODS—

I WANDER through the woods, full of a
 dim
 And tender twilight, when is heard no
 sound

Save of the shadowy pine's perpetual
 hymn,
 Or of the shivering grass upon the
 ground.

Through the dark branches, whereon few
 birds rest,
 Glimmers the fair moon's calm, but ten-
 der light;
 Yet there the wood-dove builds her careless
 nest,
 And calls her mate through the still
 summer night.

But little dew shall sparkle on the ground,
 Heavy and motionless the shadows lie,
 Now deep on pathways, now on mossy
 mound,
 Through which falls broken light of star-
 lit sky.

So may the place have looked in centuries
 past,
 Scarcely less melancholy, nor less fair—
 The heavy boughs of pine trees, in the
 blast
 Swaying and tossing, with forlornest air!

Only when life obtrudes upon the scene
 A change comes o'er the sadness of its
 days,
 Somewhat less gloomy grows its sombre
 green,
 On which the eyes of later centuries
 gaze!

OH! AS THE WAVES GO OUT—

OH! as the waves go out into the sky,
 So I, O Heaven! would calmly come to
 Thee—
 And in Thy hour of mercy gently die,
 Even as the leaflet falleth from the
 tree.

Life is not quite a boon of so much
 pleasure
 That one would grieve to see it pass
 away,
 Although to some it brings a fuller measure
 Of joy than sorrow, to each passing
 day.

However this may be—grieve not to see
 Life's angel ever softly fold its wings!—
 For in the vistas of Eternity
 May sleep—we know not what, of larger
 things!

Oft in the past is something to regret,
 Oft is there much to weep for, in each
 morrow—
 Would that to us were given to forget—
 Seeing that memory brings such bitter
 sorrow.

Believing in the wisdom—from my soul—
 Of all creations Heaven Himself hath
 made—
 I care but little how the centuries roll,
 Nor how the years shall blossom, grow,
 and fade—

Full much ephemeral glory lies around
 us,
 And unto many nothing seemeth new—
 The Fool would to his sophistry fain have
 bound us;
 But thoughtful eyes shall pierce beyond
 his view!

EARTHLY VISIONS.

A REBUKE.

MAN—living on earth's ever-shifting plains
 Lives far too anxiously his little hour—
 And now, wroth with his weakness, he
 complains—
 And now too much rejoices in his
 power;

Forgetful gloomy death is ever near,
 His grim eyes piercing even our fairest
 bowers,
 His right hand raised to fling his fatal
 spear,
 His bony feet upon our sweetest flowers.

Now, as remembering not his myriad
 dead,
 Man takes across the world his chosen
 way,
 And presses on with glad and eager tread,
Oft unobservant of the passing day—

His eyes upon some far-off lands are
 fixed,

He sees the glory of his coming years—
 His proud ambitions often seem unmixed
 And undisturbed by weak or wiser
 fears—

He learneth little that the world might
 teach,

He learneth little of his brother's past—
 Nor what misfortune's lessons often preach,
 As though good fortune would for ever
 last!

RULES—FOR THE WEAK?

BLESSED are the peacemakers — blessed
 those

Who lie not — even in speaking of their
 foes;

Blessed the soft word, turning away
 wrath—

The step that takes a charitable path!

These rules—to some—seem *only for the
 weak* :—

“’Tis better far a scornful word to speak
 Than follow such inane and mild
 directions,

Save under rare—ah! but *what* rare—
 exceptions!

“That ‘soft word’ that the Bible so much
 praised

Was never meant for cases *such as
 these!*

Your skin was far too easily *abraded*,
 ‘Twas done for your *improvement*, if you
 please!”

Oh! that large lie! to stab, with all your
 power,

With all your spite—as some such crea-
 tures would—

And choosing always some defenceless
 hour—

Then swear they did it—“*only for your
 good!*”

Yet this is the old formula—well known
 To but too many members of the class :

Would they might take their “goodness”
down below—

Where they as gods, midst their own
 kind, might pass!

A LESSON OF LIFE.

THOU can'st not take to Heaven the things
of earth—

Thy coffin may be furnished with fine
gold—

And great may be thy station, proud thy
birth—

Alas! these things are all of earthly
mould!

Yes! earth produced them—from herself
they came

To earth they shall return, as all things
must—

Soon — or more late — the glory of thy
name

Returns with thee, and mingles with
the dust.

The wreath of charity, if thine to take,
Though not with the world's costly
gems may glow,

Beyond all other crowns a crown shall
make,

Shining with pearls, not from the
world below.

So—lay the circlet of earth's metals down—
Thou can'st not wear it in a loftier
place—

Cast it behind thee on the grave-yard—
crown

Of earth for those who follow in thy race.

These gauds are not for the fair world
above;

There gems shall tarnish—brilliants shall
not shine—

For peace and charity—divinest love,
Shall glorify the throne that there is
thine.

WAITING.

ALAS! the flowers that spring shall ne'er
restore—

Alas! to look back on the past once more—
The road, lost in the mad heat of pursuit,
The rotting of the yet ungathered fruit.

The primroses we *should* have gathered—
dead!—

The untrained roses—with their petals
shed!

The lilies, withered by the eastern blast—
The sky so promising—now overcast!

Ah, God! to look upon a once fair field,
And note the produce it was prayed to
yield,

All dead, uprooted! — harvest days are
o'er,—

The hour of gathering shall return no
more.

O Life! thy final paths — that no one
knows,

Thy ever steady marching to the close—
The graves that none shall ever here fore-
tell,

Until the last dark moments of farewell!—

Hopeless our dreams—they vanish as we
gaze,

Joining the fading ones of earlier days—
And leaving nothing but a weary sigh,
To mark the bitter spots wherein they lie!

Only the fairer may we sometimes meet,
And find them realised—even yet more
sweet—

But waiting their fulfilment in a sphere
Where Heaven's own smile is beautiful
and clear!

BE PATIENT!

BE patient! Few and dark may be thy
days,

Yet, ere thou dost upbraid, reflect and
pause!

Thou can'st not fathom thy Creator's
ways,

Nor comprehend His everlasting laws.

Be patient! though thy path be sown with
thorns,

And though the cries of sin and war
increase,

Still—patience most the Christian's brow
adorns,

And fills his soul with dignity and peace.

Be patient! though thine eyes may never
see
Into the gloom to pierce the light
Beyond,
Although is God still unrevealed to thee,
Thou still art weak to cavil, to despond.

For some wise purposes Man's feeble
brain
May never read the secrets of his dead.
His powers to grasp, or understand, are
vain,
The rules eternal reaching o'er his head.

Only from feebleness dost thou complain,
Thou may'st philosophise, yet art no
seer,
There shall be things even man can never
strain
His mind to compass, in his sojourn here!

TO DEATH!

YET—spirit stern!
Thou comest sometimes in Life's ten-
derest hours—
Ah! — one dark lesson all of us
must learn—
Thou hast the entry to our fairest
bowers!

Aye! spirit cold!
Thou hast no care for loveliness, or for
joy—
Thou stealest the first lambkins of the
fold—
And the first nestlings of the dove
destroy!

Oh! spirit hard!
There is a cold glance in thy joyless
eye—
And where sweet flowers the summer
woods have starred,
Thy cruel footsteps *pause*—in passing
by!

Oh! spirit cruel!
Thou hast no thought for youth, or
beauty's glow—
The brightest buds are chosen for thy fuel,
With which—sneer some!—to light thy
fires below!

Oh! spirit dark—
Yet may'st thou be a messenger of love—
For thou may'st take this life's too feeble
spark,
To brighter, to more happy, realms
above!

AGES OF FAITH AND AGES OF SCEPTICISM.

YOUTH—with its shy hopes and its louder
fears,
Youth—that believeth simply all it hears—
Youth—that at first the truth so fondly
sees
Of lessons taught it at its parents' knees—
Youth—who seeks later, with his ardent
eyes,
To read the mighty secrets of the skies—
Who, in the first rush of untrammelled
thought
Treats, with rich scorn, the early lessons
taught—

Who, critically looking to the roof
Of heaven, demands of all things, sign, or
proof—
And ere he credence gives to ought,
demands
It shall be reached, by either brain—or
hands—

Sneers at the records of the far-off past—
Or, if believing aught, believes the *last*—
Then, later on, is angered by the school
That teaches that the "wise" man is a
fool—

Then—sometimes later still, would fain
retrace
His "progress" and regain a former
place—
Take back his earlier theory, or belief—
And find in both new comfort—joy—
relief—

Then cometh, it may be, near and more
near,
The perfect faith and love that cast out
Fear!
No longer in the track of the lost sheep,
Once more he scales—and gains—Heaven's
mighty steep.

AGAIN—REBUKES TO A MOURNER.

(See also page 552.)

OH! thou complaining spirit, lift thine eyes!—

Look not so steadfastly upon the gloom—
Can'st thou not see the light of other
skies,

Hast thou no thought beyond the
shadowy tomb?

Thine eyes are ever on the grave's pale
flowers,

That only blossom when the winds are
warm—

Thy thoughts are ever for our darkest
hours,

Not for the daisy, smiling through the
storm.

Seest thou the blossoms of the sweet wild-
rose?—

Even pure and tender as a poet's
dream—

The stately water-lilies that repose
So calmly on the breast of yon dark
stream?

Hear the glad lark's song, thrilling in the
air!

The humming bees that stir the rose's
leaf!—

Are these the sounds of darkness and
despair,

The bitterness of hopelessness and grief?

Yes! thou hast much, thou grievous soul,
to learn—

Thy dull eyes look too much into the
night—

Mourn not for ever in the dark, but turn
Thy gaze to meet the ever-living Light!

GOD HELP THEE!

GOD help thee! if thy thoughts are but of
flowers

Thyself hast raised to make thy dwelling
sweet—

Not of the dark and the laborious hours
Of those that pace the city's crowded
street.

God help thee! if through night thy head
hath lain

Upon thy pillow, with no bitter sigh,
“Oh! for my sins forgive me—yet again—
And let me know Thy pardon ere I
die!”

God help thee! if thy daily hours are
spent

In finding out thy brother's sinful ways,
Rather than sadly seeking to repent

The many faults of thine own passing
days—

God help thee! if thy thoughts but rest
within,

Full of poor vanity—meaner conceit—
Seeing not thine own feebleness—thy sin—
The selfishness, that dogs thy very
feet!—

God help thee! if throughout thy life's
full years

Thou hast for little cared, save thine
own woes,

Or joys and troubles—not for others' tears,
Not for thy brother's toil, but *thy*
repose—

God help thee! if regarding thine own
face,

Thou seest only what delights thy
view—

Nor in its many faulty outlines trace
The thoughts that thou would'st have
another rue—

Yes! may God help thee, if from morn to
night

One thought alone hath filled thy selfish
breast—

That of mere vulgar pride and vain delight,
Rather than of the sorrows of the rest!

TIME PASSES ON!

THE vessel they sent roughly from the
shore

Hath met the storm and shall return no
more.

One bitter lesson here each mortal learns—
Time passes on, and Time no more
returns.

They have to Friendship's hand no further
claim—
Who forced her down upon her knees in
shame—
Who stole the roses from her noble head—
Their stalks dishonoured and their petals
shed—

False oaths they swore to her—nor lightly
swore,
But with the tones of honour and of
weight,
But they forgot them as the days passed
o'er—
Yes! they forgot them as the years grew
late—

They offered flowers and vowed they would
not die,
That they would blossom through all
coming years—
Alike beneath a dark or smiling sky—
Alike through joy and health, and pain
and tears—

Ah! but the vessel roughly sent from shore
Hath met the storm and shall return no
more—
One bitter lesson here each mortal learns—
Time passes on—and *Time no more re-
turns!*

OUR PATIENT CREATOR.

OH! Thou who dwellest in the world
beyond,
Amidst the storms of life to Thee we
pray—
Let not our weak, unsteady steps despond,
Despite the shadows that beset our way.

Father of Life—Father of Death—alike—
Who knowest all the secrets of the
tomb—
Let not Thy mighty hand be raised to
strike—
Veil not Thy face in anger and in gloom.

Let not the infidel and scoffer tread
Beneath their feet the fair flowers of
Thy land—
Thou art a jealous God—as Thou hast
said—
And in Thine anger mighty is Thy
hand!

Thou also art a patient God—we know—
Forgiving, though a myriad times be-
trayed—
Patient in kindness, and to anger slow—
Unlike the creature in Thine image
made!

Forgive us yet again, O God—in need—
Thou King of every people, land and
clime—
The world hath sown a crop of bitter seed,
One that must ripen in despair and
crime.

GOD KNOWETH: IN THAT KNOWLEDGE CALMLY REST.

GOD sends His heavy tempests earthward
—all
Come from one strong, Almighty Hand
alone—
Recall thou this when bitter shadows fall—
Nor sit amidst the darkness but to moan.
No! thou may'st know not *why* thou wert
deceived,
Yet take this comfort ever to thy breast,
Whatever sorrow hath thy soul received
God knoweth! — in that knowledge
calmly rest.

Our view is checked, or troubled, and our
sight
Stayed often by the shadows of our
ways—
Now dazzled by some new, mysterious
light
And now confused by the swift-
darkening days

God sends the shadows — yea! and it is
God
Who sends His fresh wind into stagnant
shade,
The sweet, bright flowers, upspringing
from the sod,
The ripened fruits, for which we long
have prayed.

God sends the north wind—as the summer
showers,
The storm—the sunshine—both shall
come from Him—

Later the birds sing sweetly in our bowers,
And so we listen—till the world grows dim!

PRAYER AT NIGHT.

THERE is no sweeter balm,
There is no purer calm,
Than that which night's last prayer can
bring the soul,
As earnest words we speak,
Tears dry upon the cheek,
And from the heavy brow the dark clouds
roll!

So sweep the mists away,
As from uprising day—
And Hope again will cheer the sinking
heart—
O'er the pale brow of woe
There comes a gentle glow,
While the dark fears of faithlessness de-
part!

So shall sweet Peace descend—
The mantle of a friend
Seems wrapping us in safe and pure
embrace—
A Hand is at the helm,
And fears no more o'erwhelm,
And trust again returns, with soothing
grace.

Thus sink we to our rest—
Thus sleep upon the breast
Of love, with its forgetfulness of woes—
Until the sleeper wakes
Another morning breaks—
And brighter visions to our eyes uncloset!

ALONE.

I AM alone—alone—
With thought—with God—and in this
quiet hour
The winds have lost their moan—
The waves have lost their power—

I weep no more—no more—
The skies have now a calm and settled
grey—
The days that went before
O'ershadow not my way—

Hope shineth on the sea—
Hope smileth in the tender, evening sky—
And through the twilight tree
Comes but the west wind's sigh—

O Death—thy bitter blast
Hath broken down my flowers upon the
plain—
Yet now thy voice hath passed
Into sad music's strain—

I am alone—alone—
With thought—with God—and in this quiet
hour
The winds have lost their moan—
The waves have lost their power!

THE EVEN-SONG.

HEAR ye that song? It is the even-song!
The earth is weary and the earth is
tired—
The race shall not be always to the
strong—
He falleth lowest who hath most aspired!

Go—rest! thank Heaven if, now thy day
hath passed,
No blighting storm hath blurred thy
life's fair scene—
Thank Heaven! if thou hast known no evil
blast,
To blight thy spring's first sweet and
tender green.

Thank Heaven — if on thy pillow thou
can'st lay
Thy weary head without a thought of
shame—
If flowers that thou hast gathered on thy
way,
None in a cruel, or slighting tone shall
name.

Thank Heaven—if on those many busy
hours
That have demanded of thee thought
and care,
There yet shall jar upon thy soul *no hours*
Marked by Life's bitterness and thy
despair!

Thank Heaven! if in thy darkest hours
of night

There are no dreams of regions, grim
and vast!—

And if thy moonlit skies are pure and
bright,

Untroubled by the phantoms of the
past!

BENEATH HIGH HEAVEN—

BENEATH High Heaven the great world
takes its place,

Set in its orb by an Almighty God—

Its dwellers—some who know His love
and grace,

And some who only mock His lightning
rod.

Beyond all reckoning by the mind of man
The universe rolls on—year after year!

And what the end of its Creator's plan
Is known to none who dwell within our
sphere.

A myriad centuries may that great world
claim,

A myriad centuries more may be its
age—

Its records some of glory, some of shame,
And many writ upon a bloodstained
page—

And man, presumptuous man, as he suc-
ceeds

His brother's patrimony on the land,
Assumes all history of the past he reads,
Pretends its future life to understand!

We are so feeble, yet are so elate—
Forgetting the poor empire of our
breath—

We are so small, yet think ourselves so
great—

Yet can create not life, nor rule our
death!

I CALL TO THEE.

I CALL to Thee in the still hours of night,
I look up, praying, through the starlit
air,

Where Thou may'st have a realm of
wondrous Light,

Above our plains of misery, or despair.

Thy Face is veiled, yet curious souls who
wonder

What it may be, are spirit-poor indeed—
And though Thy voice may not be in the
thunder

It need not weaken Faith—nor change a
creed!

The mind of man is far too frail to bear
The voice that taught a baby universe—
Not always it supports its earthly care—

Too vivid thoughts may blight it as a
curse.

Our minds are not *our* work, although
some seem

To claim them strangely even as their
own!—

And yet — we cannot shape a single
dream—

Nor call up from the depths one sweet,
lost tone!

Man is most feeble when he dares to
boast

That he hath won, himself, life's loftiest
place—

And he who doth esteem himself the
most,

Is even the feeblest of this earthly race!

THANKFULNESS FOR REST.

AH, God! I thank Thee — for this quiet
rest,

Here fall no bitter shadows of the past,
Here shall the soul no longer be dis-
tressed

By the foul gusts of an *unnatural* blast!

I do forget me, here, the voice of spite,
The torrent of past foul, malicious lies,

I do forget the heavy shades of night,
Here only see the beauty of Thy skies—

I do forget the many, weary years
When envious eyes and lips watched o'er
my path—

I do forget the many bitter tears
Then tarnishing the brightness of my
hearth—

Here think I of Thy mercy—of Thy love—
The fair and restful life that breathes
around—

Here pure and glowing skies bend from
above—

Here friendly footsteps only touch the
ground.

All things tell of Thy goodness in the
end—

Therefore shall treachery enter now no
more—

I hear the voice but of a faithful friend,
Storms lie behind—and sunshine lies
before!

THE RESTFUL SMILE OF GOD.

So—one by one shall thy false friends pass
away—

And their shadows blast no more thy fairer
day—

So—one by one, shall the footsteps of thy
foes

Pass into the calmness of the eve's re-
pose—

Thy sores shall heal, thy wounds no more
shall bleed,

As thou shalt forget each vile one's bitter
deed—

Forget that their breath was breathed upon
thy bowers,

That a festering hand hath sought to pluck
thy flowers—

Yes! year by year thou wilt forget that
they

Threw even a passing shadow on thy way,
That even thy days of joy, so bright, so
brief,

They sought to dim with evil clouds of
grief—

Now the days are calmer for the storms
that were,

There is more reposefulness, in the later
air,

And we look back to the once dark skies
behind,

To marvel now that they troubled so our
mind!

And the rest is sweetest when the fight is
o'er!

And the strengthened steps shall seek their
path once more—

And our thoughts turn from the blossom-
covered sod,

*To the peace o'erhead and the restful
smile of God!*

GOD SENT THE GLOW—.

(SPRING MORNING, 1886.)

THE world is beautiful, in these sweet
hours,

In which no harsh and jarring tones are
heard—

Full of the scents of earth's delicious
flowers,

Glad with the low of cattle, song of
bird.

As the fair sky smiles on the shore and
waves

How glowing with the joy of Heaven it
seems!

No more the sad receptacles for graves,
But brighter even than our fairest
dreams.

Smell the sweet roses in the fragrant
hedges,

Hear the lambs bleating in the fields of
grass—

The call of water birds amongst the
sedges—

The violet-scented lanes through which
we pass—

Listen!—the lark is singing high in air

Its song of ecstasy—of full delight—

Are these the realms of sorrow and
despair—

Are these the realms of misery and
blight?

Enjoy it while ye can — God sent the
glow

Of warmth and light, but after—cometh
Death!

O'er all things tender, wintry winds shall
blow—

Thy flowers with "wither at the north
wind's breath."

LOST—BENEATH THE FUNERAL
PALL!

SHALL not the Winter come before the
Spring?
Earth sleepeth to revive—nothing shall
pass
To death—not even the violets in the
grass,
The swallow shall return upon the wing—
Death seems to hold, a *passing* time, his
prey—
And lays it in the shadows of the tomb
Only again to rise—again to bloom
Amidst the fair forms of a brighter
day—
Fear not that darkness shall the soul
await—
God said there shall be Light and there
was Light,
That shall not evermore be quenched in
night—
That shineth through Eternity's strong
Gate.
O unbeliever!—*thou of feeble soul*—
O unbeliever! thou of wearied eyes,—
Darkness upon thy hopeless eyelids
lies—
Before thee vainly God's bright planets
roll—
Yet laws of nature shall rebuke thee —
all
Is made to pass and yet to live again—
Shall even nature speak to thee in vain—
So leave thee—lost beneath the funeral
pall!

DARKEST BEFORE DAWN.

AN ECHO—AND AN ANSWERING ECHO!

"No more! no more! hear'st thou that
parting knell?

How its sad echoes fall and sadly swell—
Then die, to rise again upon the air—
A lesson that seems heavy with despair!

"And shall we wait and shall we know no
change—

Shall all things now be simply dull and
strange?

Shall we look never more into those eyes
That cheered us, as with light from
Heaven's own skies?

"No more! no more!—oft on this dreary
earth

Death's feet too closely follow those of
birth—

The lily's cup is chilled by sudden
snows,—

The north wind's breath destroys the early
rose."

"*Nay!*—let thy soul be large enough to
hold

With hope, a creed—a faith not dead or
cold—

But one that bids thee look up for a light
That glows where there is neither death,
nor blight.

"Fret thou not o'er the troubled night of
Man,

For 'Darkest before Dawn' is nature's
plan!

The eyes that look with patience on earth's
woes

In fairer, brighter regions shall unclose!"

A MIDNIGHT BOUQUET, AND OTHER POEMS.

IN THE WATCHES OF THE NIGHT.

INTRODUCTION.

IN the calm summer night, when on each
curled

And drooping leaf of fern the dew-drop
shines,

Often the echoes of the distant world
Come through yon silent woods of
sombre pines!—

And sometimes, in these old-world shadowy
bowers

The air by sounds both wild and weird
is stirred—

And through the midnight's calmly-
listening hours

The hoot of melancholy owl is heard—

So one has heard the squealing of a rat,
Telling of battles fought out in the
dark—

The far-heard yelling of a prowling cat,
When startled by a watch-dog's sudden
bark—

Then, in a solemn pause, one hears the
shrill

And spiteful *ping* of gnat upon the air,
Whose evil "spiritings,"—done "with a
will,"—

May drive a pensive student to
despair!—

Yet, as sweet recompence, the songs of
lovers

Fall often tenderly upon the ear—

Or boatswain's lay, or chant of some night-
rovers

Now faint and far-off—now distinct and
near.

Therefore, thou wondrous, fair and solemn
Night,

With what mixed dreams thou can'st the
soul beguile;—

As the moon rises, and, serenely bright,
Looks on the earth that lies beneath her
smile!

A MIDNIGHT BOUQUET.

FILLING with a mixed perfume the night
air

There is a bouquet in a quiet room,
A bouquet seeming, at the first, but fair,
Of spotless lilies — roses rich with
bloom—

Yet mixed with these, by some unfriendly
hand,

Are blossoms also, of disease and blight,
Weeds that have sprung up on some evil
land,

Whose loathsome scent profanes the holy
night—

Here leaves that overhung a snaky bank,
Or that from swamps by lizards haunted
came—

Black with the taint of poisons—foul and
rank—

The emblems of full many things of
shame—

And here—brought from some green, some
forest bowers,

Are sweet, wild roses — beautiful, but
pale—

Here scented violets — dearest of all
flowers—

And here the primrose from the moonlit
dale.

Even so our memories seem—distressed or
sweet,

Now filling but with thoughts of love
and joy—

And some that with disgust alone we greet,
And would we might for evermore
destroy!

EYES OF CHARITY.

I KNOW of little, telling more of heaven,
Than eyes of charity!—clear eyes that
gaze,

With that true light that seems to be God-
given,

To note the fairer things of earth-bound
ways.

And that of much that spreads before their
view

Will love to point out health and
strength and bloom—

And look out rather for clear skies of blue,
Than for the heavy atmospheres of
gloom—

Yes!—eyes that note a spreading apple-
tree,

Not only for the blossoms that show
blight,

But—with more generous vision—seek to
see

Those that are ruddy-cheeked and clear
and bright.

That count the clustering roses of the
wood,

The flowers that seem of joy and health
to tell,—

And learn that many things of earth are
good—

Are blessings sent from Heaven — not
snares from Hell!

The same strong, merciful and grateful
soul

Will purify *itself* from evil taint,

So that in reaching to its final goal

Heaven shall receive it, even as a saint!

AYE! SENT FROM HEAVEN!

LOVE! with thy voice so tender and so
low—

Love! with thy glowing eyes—thine out-
stretched hands—

Love! sent from Heaven to brighten worlds
below,

To cover with fair flowers our barren
lands—

From early life was I, Love! one of
thine!—

And listened to thy music's thrilling
strains,

And taught thy roses in fair wreaths to
twine,

While wandering through thy woods, or
o'er thy plains—

Thou hast given greater softness to the
light

Of sunset—and to fairy moonlit hours—

Through thee the stars have seemed more
strangely bright,

As they shone, smiling, *through my
children's bowers—*

Thou hast made sweeter all the fruits of
earth—

Through thee the dove hath built its
happy nest—

Throughout the length, O Love!—around
the girth

Of this great world thy steps have been
impressed—

Men often treat thee ill—alas! the vile

Place burning ploughshares on thy fairest
paths—

The very glory of thy name defile,

Until thy place is empty by their
hearths!

WHY IS IT, LOVE?

O LOVE!—why is it thou dost bring such
bliss

To some who dwell upon these earthly
plains,

While others have not even known thy
kiss,

Nor heard thy music's sweet, immortal
strains?

Thou dost pass over some as with despair,
Nor wilt thou dwell with them at any
hours!—

As though their souls were neither pure,
nor fair,

Their stolid brows unfit for thy rich
flowers!

They see thee not—they touch thee not—
they cry

Thou art but a deluding dream below—
And so they dwell on earth—they live,

they die,
But yet thy heavenly presence never
know!

'Tis sad to think that *any* live, whom thou
Hast passed by with no touch of thy

fair hands—

Who never may behold thy glorious brow,
Who are as outcasts from thy moonlit

lands.

Love! Love! have pity!—for thy glorious
breath
Brings beauty to our every bud that
blooms—
Thou art a presence noble even in death—
No garlands rival thine upon our
tombs.

OH! HE WHO NE’ER HATH
MET THEE—

OH! he who ne’er hath met thee on this
earth,
Who never felt the warmth of thy fair
sky,
Is but a subject for thy pitying mirth,
O Love! or for compassion’s gracious
sigh.

He is as one who wanders on the shore
And never yet a shining pearl hath
found—
As one who through our orchards shall
explore
To note no fruits that shall be fair and
sound.

Aye! as a dweller under murky skies,
Who never in the summer can rejoice,
Is he who hath not gazed into thine
eyes,
O Love! nor heard the echo of thy
voice!

He is as one who ne’er hath plucked a
rose,
And only wanders forth for fruits and
flowers
Where wormwood, or the prickly thistle
grows,
And knotted crab-trees twist by night-
shade bowers—

Thou wilt not ever crown *his* brow with
roses—
Nor soothe his dying hours with dulcet
tones—
Neither when he amongst the dead
reposes
Wilt thou hang garlands o’er dishonoured
bones!

“LOVE STEALS SLOWLY
THROUGH THE LOUD
ACCLAIM—”

“ Love steals slowly through the loud acclaim
To murmur a ‘God bless you!’ ”—LOWELL.

IN no form art thou “balderdash,”* O
Love!

For thou indeed art fair in every guise—
Nothing more surely cometh from above,
And with more beauty gathered from the
skies!

Thou art Protean in thy many shapes,
And in them all thou art divinely sweet—
How fair a garment, Love! thy figure
drapes!—

And what bright roses blossom round
thy feet!—

Thy voice hath many accents—low but
clear

To those who prize them—and well
understood—

Falling as heavenly music on the ear,
In nothing evil—nay! in all things
good!—

But some, alas!—(and there are many yet
Upon this earth — unhappy spirits,
they!—)

Thou needs must chafe, with an incessant
fret

That they are made but of inferior
clay!—

These dwell on cold and bitter things too
much—

Thou art to them a blight and nothing
less—

Love! Love!—such souls as these thou
can’st not touch—

Love! Love! such paths as theirs thou
can’st not bless!

CONFLICTING VIEWS.

EARTH! with thy smiling skies—thy deep,
blue seas—

Thy sun by day—thy brilliant stars by
night—

Thy hills and plains—thy flowers—thy
verdant trees—
Thy ever-changing warmth—thy varying
light—

Earth! with thy many moods—thy won-
drous storms—

Thy meteors and thy startling lightning
gleams—

Thy pensive moonlight—and the countless
forms

Of beauty in thy woods—thy fields—thy
streams—

O Earth—with all these things how fair
thou art!

The young will leave thee oft with
saddest tears,

The loved and happy groan from thee to
part,

To seek the strange Unknown of unseen
spheres—

So beautiful—and yet so full of grief!—
Grief shadowing ever an unmeasured
space—

Thy days of happiness are all too brief—
The lines of war and sin are on thy
face—

How could we, then, O Earth—o'ercome
despair

Save for the hope—a hope that cannot
die,

That there are worlds to come, more bright
and fair,

Beyond the boundless reach of thy blue
sky.

I CANNOT BEAR TO HEAR SWEET
MUSIC'S STRAIN—

(See page 65.)

I KNOW it seemeth strange to some, and
yet

I cannot bear to hear sweet music's
strain—

It bringeth back the thoughts I would
forget—

Aye! full of exquisite, if tender pain.

Yes! music maketh sad, beyond all
speech—

It calls up spirits from grass-covered
graves—

From spots to which can fancy only
reach—

From lands that lie beyond our ocean
waves.

That Song!—mine eyes were full of blind-
ing tears,

As on the air its thrilling echoes fell—
That Song!—heard in those far-off, dreamy
years—

What legends of past griefs it seemed to
tell!

Ha! hearest thou not the "Dead March
in Saul"!

And as its chords peal grandly through
the sky,

And as upon thine ear their echoes fall,
Do they not stir thy soul with times gone
by?

O music!—tears I cannot lightly shed,
Mine is a dry and melancholy care,

But thou recallest faces of my dead,
With the dark memories of a past
dispair.

I HAVE HAD GREATER JOY
THAN WORDS CAN TELL.

YET—if my griefs in life were great, God
knows

I have had *greater joy* than words can
tell!—

If I have suffered from most bitter woes
So have I sometimes seemed in Heaven
to dwell.

I have known hours—beyond all human
speech

In their intensity and depth of bliss—
That seemed to lift me up fair Heaven to
reach,

To feel upon my brow an angel's kiss—

I have felt joy so great that I could sigh
brings—

And felt that *then* it had been sweet to
die—

Hearing the faint sound of immortal
wings—

I have looked into the blue heavens and
thought
There shone a face most gloriously
bright!—
Though when for clearer vision I have
sought
It melted, softened into newer light—

I have looked up into the boundless skies,
To count some of the myriad lamps of
night—
Thus seen into God's own eternal eyes,
And read the mighty law—There shall
be Light!

I HAVE LOOKED ON A FACE OF EARTH'S—SO FAIR—

I HAVE looked on a face of earth's—so
fair,
I felt that Heaven had leant that holy
light—
That no one gazing thereon need despair,
And count this world a realm of grief
and blight.

Yes! even on this slandered earth of ours
One meets with souls that seem unlike
the rest,—
So pure in love—so strong in all their
powers—
With all of noble aims and hopes pos-
sessed!—

Truly one sometimes meets—(*without* the
crowd
Of foolish sinners—vulgar Pharisees)—
Neither the vain, the upstart, nor the
proud,
Nor those that seek but their own world
to please!—

Nor simply the poor soul who seems to
live
For the mean flattery of a chosen
few—
Who only 'shall his help, his friendship
give
When to *himself* some profit shall
accrue—

To see one head *above* these common heads
Lightens the shadows of our earthly
lands—

Such radiant peace Heaven on that path-
way sheds,
No other pathway through this world
commands!

A FIRM FAITH.

TO A SCEPTICAL FRIEND.

AYE—friend! some hours of earth have
been so sweet—

I cannot think of Love but as a
breath!—

I cannot feel that here our wandering feet
End but in nothingness—in hopeless
Death!

Thy cold and dreary creed I *will* not
hold—

Not even through the dull passing of an
hour—

All things would then seem meaningless
and cold,

And Love be stripped of all her noble
power.

Oh! then I should but look into her eyes
With an overwhelming, terrible despair—
To think that, dying, she for ever dies,
That but for passing days her brow was
fair!—

Death hath no terrors now—early, or late—
One can regard it with no blanching
face,

But rather as a grim, but certain gate
Into a home of sweetness—calmness—
grace!

What are the sacrifices of pure Love—
The joy with which—for her—our life
we give,

If we may meet not, in fair realms above,
The loved for whom upon this earth we
live?

No! friend—some hours of earth have been
so sweet—

I cannot think of Love but as a
breath!—

I cannot feel that here our wandering
feet—

End but in nothingness—in hopeless
Death.

A SADDENING INFLUENCE.

YET! — oft when the warm breath of
 Poesy
 Seems stirring every flower and every
 leaf,
 My thoughts are saddened—yet I scarce
 know why—
 Something it breatheth still of human
 grief.

Something of the great sadness of this
 life—
 The weariness and plaint of human
 woe;—
 The distant echo of incessant strife—
 Fierce winds that even in fair regions
 blow—

Yet Poesy hath wondrous music—sweet
 And tender—full of whispers of bright
 flowers—
 And if the heart with gentle grief shall
 beat,
 It is the grief of earth's more holy hours.

Hearts that shall feel earth's sorrows—that
 shall sigh
 O'er the fierce pangs of wounded love—
 shall know
 As well, O Life! thy deeper ecstasy—
 Thy passing happy hours of summer
 glow—

Yet still love's strains are sad*—alas! we
 know
 How soon they change under the trum-
 pet's blast—
 Into the vulgar chords that ring below,
 Drowning the sweeter echoes, as they
 passed!

ONCE!—

ONCE, by no weakly dread of foes for-
 bidden,
 I wandered out, into a sunny spot—
 I had not heard that snakes were therein
 hidden,
 Or if I had I *then* believed it not!

Aye! for that place looked simply bright
 and fair—
 And full of pleasant flowers and ripen-
 ing fruit—
 So—full of rashness, wandering here and
 there—
 One sang the songs that youth's gay
 nature suit.

As Echo would each careless note repeat—
 They sounded only grateful to the ear—
 Not *then*, with these—so tender, happy,
 sweet,—
 Aroused those *others*, now too vilely
 clear!

Yet it may not be Echo's fault, at last—
 But that of untuned ears—indifferent
 brains—
 Of those that as our glad song floated
 past,
 Mixed their own vulgar and unpleasant
 strains.

They thus do murder truth and music
 both—
 Having but ears that nature never
 taught—
 Yet—did they swear, would swear, with
 a strong oath,
 Each note of old those untrue ears had
 caught!

NETTLES IN A BOUQUET!

YES! they look harmless, friend—yet touch
 them not!
 For war against all tender skins they
 wage—
 Though gathered were they in a sunny
 spot—
 Beside the harmless oxlip and wild sage!

But *if* thou touchest—grasp them with firm
 hand!—
 'Tis an old lesson—though forgotten
 often—
 Or they may leave their rootlets in thy
 land—
 And no kind treatment shall their poison
 soften!

* So thought Shakespeare's Jessica, when she heard that *other* voice of poetry and love—sweet music!

I—like the fabled child—at first touched lightly—
And thought my kindness kindness might beget—

But—I had cause to long remember,
dightly,
The stinging spite that in return, I met!

Ah! many in *my* garden grew, I fear,
Once on a time, viewed with but careless eyes—

I did not trouble much my ground to clear—
But let them spread at will beneath the skies!

And were you stung, you ask? Yes—truly,
friend!

Stung—until mine was but a blistered skin—

But now, one makes of them a *thorough* end!

So! though they first began the war—
I win!

THE REFLECTIONS—OF EXPERIENCE.

THE so-called “world” shows less the soul
of hate,

Of trivial envies, and of smaller mean-
ness,

Than some—who yet walk with the
Christian’s *gait*,

Although hath each a soul of very *lean-
ness*!

Aye! and with all its sins the “wicked
world”

Will yet evince less of that “self-
appraise”

That oft the Pharisee’s mean lip hath
curled,

And seems to “flavour” his *too* oily
ways!

That *worst* conceit—that spoils so many
brows!—

And that so many a feeblar soul in-
grains,

That only to its own fixed creed allows
The glory that *true* “holiness” at-
tains!—

The faith that there needs be an evil
brand

On brows *not shaped exactly as their
own*,

On steps not *theirs*—upon this earthly
land,—

On minds to whom their “views” may
be unknown!—

The hugging their own souls with huge
conceit—

The boast that theirs alone are saintly
feet,—

This is, methinks, the class to surely
swell

That ancient region that some still call—
Hell!

A WRONG SORT!—I.

SHOULD you be weary — or of spirit
sad,

Go never near “those people,” O my
friend!

Then will they treat you as though you
were mad,

Or even *worse* than mad — you may
depend!

Go near them when the sun shines brightly
down

On you and yours—on mountain, plain,
and grove—

When life to thee appears without a
frown—

When all seems calm, and happiness and
love!

Aye!—go when life seems e’en without a
cloud—

Go when thy prospect seems of peace
secure,

When joy’s triumphal blast rings clear
and loud—

That they will smile *that* hour be *very*
sure!

But go not near them when thy days are
dark,

Ha!—go not near them when thou hast
a thorn

Deep in thy flesh—or thou wilt be a mark
For all their cold contempt or bitter
scorn!

Seek never for an entrance through their
door

When clouds of heavy woes obscure thy
day,

When thou art sick—and weary—and foot-
sore—

For they will harshly drive thee—*then*
—away!

A WRONG SORT.—II.

AYE! there is something in their strong
conceit

That makes those whom you mention
untrue friends—

With vanity grow few things that are
sweet,

Its mean eyes are but keen for its
own ends.

And these “ends” in *self* ever culminate—
Like serpent-lengths around their feet
they coil—

For self they labour—early hours and
late!—

“For no one better surely could they
toil?”

And even if they *you* appeared to serve
’Twas not to bring you smiles—to stay
your tears,

From paths of selfishness they could not
swerve—

For they had followed them through all
their years!

Self was the thing they worshipped—in
their eyes,

Whenever from the earth they turned
their gaze,

Whenever they looked up to Heavenly
skies,

Was still the thought — how Heaven
might help *their* ways!

Their “kindness” was a selfish kindness,
purely—

And only through a sunny day could
last—

For when your *usefulness* was gone, then
surely—
’Twas time for them to *quite* forget the
past!

A QUESTION.

(ASKED OF A COLD, SELFISH PERSON.)

DOST thou not sometimes feel that it is
sad

To note, in looking back on thy past
years,

How little pity thy cold heart hath had
For others’ sufferings—errors—trials—
or tears?

Was it no folly, that thy leisure hours
Were not, at times, employed in keeping
sweet

Thine own mean thoughts and strengthen-
ing thy poor powers,

In cleansing thine own careless, wander-
ing feet?

Thou would’st have found it a far nobler
plan

To help, to comfort, to exhort, to
praise—

To seek to win the love of God and man,
Instead of taking Vanity’s poor ways.

Yes!—spent thy hours in comforting the
weak,

Or urging penitence by dying beds,
Soothing the souls of the most sad and
meek,

Rather than heaping coals upon their
heads!

Denouncing others is the joy of such
As you—to *help*, you trouble not o’er-
much!

Aye! you will speak as though St. Peter’s
keys

Of Heaven were *yours*, to let in *whom you*
please!

A SORT—WHOM ONE HATH

SEEN!

THERE is a sort of sneak whom one hath
seen,

A thing of *soul* unpleasant and unclean,

If not of *body*!—and these often go
Together, as observant minds may know!

Something *too* oily is about the creatures,
Aye! in their manners even as in their
features—

A flattering deference is in their “ways”—
Their lips appear to “reek” with *sickly*
praise!

And, o’er the foolish and the restless vain,
They with undoubted might and power
reign,

Their faults they “manage,” by the rules
that please—

And learn to do this with a “fatal
ease”!

Before one—such—have we observed *go
down*

Those who of flatterers speak with sternest
frown

And most reproving lips!—while wonder-
ing much

That any even could their *fingers* touch!—

Yet did such flatter *others* but a *little*,
Compared to flatteries that *they* receive,
They’d call each one so flattered a
“lick-spittle”!

And cry—“How fools are led — how
knaves deceive!”

AN OFT-TOLD TALE!

BETWEEN a parent and her children came
A sickly flatterer, in life’s weaker years—
And dulled her brow with that most dreary
shame

That oft hath clouded e’en earth’s *strong*
careers!

I would not have a flatterer’s vulgar mind
For all the glories that this earth could
give!

Oh! of the meanest of the human kind
Are they of all the mean that here do
live!

Aye! Flattery is a mildew—a foul *sweat*—
That spoileth all of healthy flowers and
fruits,

A stain of oily loathsomeness—and yet
Full many coarse, unwholesome tastes it
suits!

I’d rather see a serpent—lithe and strong—
Hang from an oak — in moonlight
ghastly clear—

Than let a flatterer come and sing *that*
song

That hath so foul an echo—to mine ear!

(And for the thing that flatters!—I know
none

For which I feel a stronger sense of
loathing)—

’Tis as a cobweb over treasures spun,
Enough to spoil the sweetest fairy’s
clothing!—

Oh! in the lives of some it is a blight,
This love of flattery — as a deadly
mould—

And all that should have had both warmth
and light

Dies at the last, in bitterness and cold!

ONE WELL ABUSED!

FULL well abused was she! — for while
some swore

She was *too* homely—never left her door,
Yet others screamed her life was one of
show,

That all her paths led surely — *down
below!*

Some said she dressed too meanly—others
vowed

She was too “fine”—of all new
“whimsies” full!

Now cried in all she did she was “too
loud”:

And now that all she did was much “too
dull!”

For everything she did—was she well
chidden!

For everything she did not — fiercely
blamed—

All things of triumph with *sweet* care were
hidden—

All things of failure noisily proclaimed—

Oh! slandered loudly in the hours of
gloom—

Oh! slandered vilely e’en beside the
tomb—

Oh! slandered secretly when skies were blue,
By *plans* but the “initiated” knew!—

Oh! slandered in such *ghastly* — oily —
ways!
With calumnies *encrusted*, even, with
praise!—
Sweet creatures all of these—yes! bless
them all!
May sunshine only on their pathways fall!

LATE TRUTHS AND OPENED EYES!

FALSE suns no longer dazzle youthful
eyes—
False stars no longer “twinkle” in our
skies—
False lights no longer cheat benighted
ships—
False oaths no longer shock us, on
“friends’” lips.

We see the coiling worm within the bud—
The pebble, picked as diamond from the
mud—!
The wolf in the sheep’s clothing long con-
cealed,
To our more steady vision stands re-
vealed—

We note what winds had often blown
astray—
What ships had anchored in an ill-shaped
bay—
The jaunty days of falsehood now are o’er—
Against deceit we fasten now the door—

The hour at last is come, *if* but at last,
To know the ways of traitors in the past,
What lips were those that once spoke
words so fair!
And what “witch-voices” once disturbed
the air.

From heaven shall echo now sweet tones
of joy—
Records of love no malice can destroy—
Yes! voices now shall reach us from above,
Full of undying faith and deathless love.

TIMES GONE BY.

If poverty makes no new friends, still less
shall age
Once more take up false friends of times
gone by—
’Tis simply sad to read Life’s earlier page,
Recalling the false glory of its sky.

The flowers are withered and the fruits
worm-eaten—
The sweet, fair confidence — the early
trust—

Return not now — our later hours to
sweeten,
The once fair gold encrusted is with
rust!

Look we but once behind!—see what sad
fate

Have many of our early trusts o’ertaken!
The soul is wiser—as the hour grows late—
The songs of old can never now awaken!

And faith unfaithful is a dreary thing—
Friendship embittered can be sweet no
more—

A great betrayal ever leaves its sting,
The days of blind belief are rudely
o’er!

So Life shall pass — sad lessons deeply
burnt

Into the heart shall no one ever heal—
Yet it is needful dark things here are
learnt

Ere death shall set on us his final seal!

KICK NOT AGAINST THE PRICKS!

THESE things that men complain of—hate
and fight,
Belong to life on earth—none can avoid
them—

Neither religion—nor instinctive right,
In years that have gone by, have yet
destroyed them—

It lies not in our power—not in the power
Of any—thus to change our ancient clay;
“Kick not against the pricks!”—believe
the hour

Of man’s perfection is not for our day!

Go back to history — to earth’s earlier
crimes

And virtues—from the first unto this
last—

Dost thou not know that even those
later times

By the like constant storms were over-
cast!

So some old types of faces re-appear—
 As taught by many students—grave and
 wise—
 The forms—the voices—of departed years
 Still rise and fall, and yet again arise.

One has known people fret through all
 their days
 Because they met injustice on their ways!—
 Who almost moved one to a pitying
 mirth—
 As though 'twas not a mortal's fate on
 earth!

DIVINE MELANCHOLY.

YES!—it is said God sorrowed o'er the
 earth
 That He had made, because of all its
 gloom—
 Because its fruits seemed of such little
 worth—
 Because its flowers seemed of such tar-
 nished bloom—

And—"There is no one righteous—no!
 not one!"

An old-world cry still ringing on the air
 Of earth, as it moves round the ancient
 sun—
 The echo of earth's sorrow and despair.

And truly is there much of ill-grown
 grain—

Of herbs worm-ridden, that but grow to
 perish—

And much of marsh-land—of foul-breath-
 ing plain—

Of things man had far better kill than
 cherish—

Therefore for others be thou ever sad—
 As Heaven is sad—to see our faulty
 paths—

To mark the weak — the criminal — the
 mad—

The broken promises — dishonoured
 hearths;

But for thyself—be cheerful, full of joy,
Only if thou art wiser than the rest—
 And *if* thy silence is without alloy,
 And *if* no strong hand knocketh at thy
 breast!

ONE—BRAVE AND TRUE.

TRULY—no common race of life *he* raced,
 But one that led him to the loftiest end—
 His nerves were ever strongly, calmly
 braced,

To fight his foe and to protect his friend.

His rule was that of plain, straightforward
 duty—

His path the path that he esteemed the
 right,
 And on his brow there was a crown of
 beauty,
 Seen by the eyes that loved him, ever
 bright.

The strong and simple ways of life *he*
 trod,

Were neither of the Pharisee nor hind—
 So that he walked the ways approved by
 God

He cared not for the plaudits of his
 kind.

A calm and ever a straightforward man,
 He slandered no one's home and no
 one's hearth—

He held in scorn a yet too common plan,
 To win by pushing others from his path.

The envious slandered him at Honour's
 gate—

Sought vainly, vilely, to disturb his rest,
 Pursued him with a mean, vindictive hate—
He—went his way!—God's peace within
 his breast!

A SHADY RACE!

To —.

RUN thou thy race in shade — who but
 observes

The sins—the crimes—the follies of thy
 brothers—

But passing notice path of thine de-
 serves!—

Nor shall it gain the plaudits won by
 others.

Let thy small voice fall not upon the ear,
 And none shall trouble thee—of that be
 sure!

Of Earth's great passing echoes have no
 fear—
 Thy *littleness* thy safety shall secure!

Unwisely hast thou dared *assume* to know—
 While knowing nothing—of the world's
 broad ways,
 The paths thy fellow-creatures take below—
 What merits, most, *thy* blame and what
thy praise!!

Learn more, or speak not! nor let thy rash
 words
 Betray thy learning as not of the
bluest!
 Thou art not even as our summer birds,
 Whom Nature teaches lessons of the
 truest!

Aye! better rest in silence—for who cares
 For the small ways of the *pretentious-*
wise!

Who hath no power, in all his life's affairs,
 Either to shade or brighten others' skies!

HOLIER THAN—THE REST!

To —.

You think that you are holier than "the
 rest,"
 Because you shrink from trouble and
 from toil—
 You think your smoother path must needs
 be blessed,
 Because you "sweep from it all things
 that soil"! *—

You leave to others all our wars to fight,
 And for all failures are they well abused!
 You blame them that their hands have
 lost their white,
 While yours are only white *because* un-
 used!

You keep within your home, and you are
 clean
 Because you help not others in distress—
 You tread not where their weary steps
 have been,
 To make the darkness of their trouble
 less.

Yes! keeping ever to your well-swept road,
 You blame all others for their stony
 paths—

Resting at peace in your well-warmed
 abode

You sneer at those who have less cheery
 hearths—

Oh! human judgment—bitter, false, unfair—
Now—as in ages of the world before—
 Sweet Charity looks on you with despair,
 And turns her footsteps from your "an-
 cient" door!

AYE! TOO OFTEN!

YES! one too often meets these saintly
 creatures,

Who move to scorn, if not provoke to
 mirth,

For one especial look is on their features,
 Distinguishing them from the rest of
 earth.

You know as plainly as if words were said
 Of one thing these good souls at *least*
 are sure,

That an approving Heaven shines on each
 head!—

That *no* souls on this earth can be so
 "pure!"

To all their imperfections sweetly blind—
 At war with others—with themselves at
 peace—

They dream that Heaven is filled with
 their own kind,
 A population that *they* shall increase!

It is our *loving* spirits—(and not *they*,
 Who go with scorn and anger on their
 way,)—

Who shall inherit Heaven—souls strong,
 yet meek—

Not the "upbraiding" sort—of whom
 we speak—

Who, full of evil, of self-righteous pride,
 All *other* "Christians" of the earth
 deride,

Be-smearing them with all the mud their
 hands

Can gather on their own *too* "ill-
 drained" lands!

* Not our statement—but—"Another's!" as poor Moddle would have said.—See "Martin Chuzzlewit."

A LITTLE MIND!

THOU—to whom Fate hath given so small
a mind—
Thou — a production of Earth's smaller
kind—
What strange conceit shines in those pale,
grey eyes—
How darest thou esteem thyself so wise?
Thou—who hast led so poor, so small a
life,
Long as a spinster—and "*too late*," as
wife!—
Thou who hast walked in such pretentious
ways—
Whose life hath been a life of little days!—
Thou—who hast lived that life for self
alone—
Who in this world but *feeble* deeds hast
done,
Who, unlike Earth's great benefactors,
lives
That life of peace a *selfish* craving gives!—
Who *boatest* of a sky untouched by
Love!—
How darest thou to think thyself above
Thy nobler sisters—whose strong footsteps
mark
The path of holy light, while thine is
dark?
What hast thou done—thou *little* of the
earth,
Save to move all to a contemptuous
mirth!—
Go! hide thyself — nor let that eldritch
shriek
Dare to be heard, where nobler spirits
speak!

AN IMPERATIVE DUTY!

Formula: "I think it only *right* that I should
speak MY MIND* to you!"

MAY we not meekly ask—What is this
MIND,

They think so necessary to declare?
Is it the outcome of a soul most kind—
The spirit of all thoughts most sweet
and fair?

Yes! what may be this "mind"?—the
gentle word,
That, putting things in Charity's own
light,
Shall turn away the bitter anger, stirred
By some real wrong, or some imagined
sight?

No! *but the voice of their own self
esteem!*—
That ranks itself far o'er its earthly
brothers'
And sisters' heads!—yes! but a vulgar
dream
Of self,—exalted in the eyes of others!

It is the voice that saith to other men
In accents of the older Pharisees—
"I am more holy far than thou"—and
then
Seeks *earth's* applause to gain — not
Heaven to please!

A voice that is a mean, depressing voice,—
And one, alas! too often heard—I could
Find it within me greatly to rejoice
If it were silenced—silenced here "for
good"!

THE CANDID FRIEND!

"Candid Friend: If there is one thing in the world
you cannot tolerate it is the truth. Oh! you may
grumble, but for all that I am right! I hate humbug,
so let's have it out!"—*Punch*, Jan. 5th, 1884.

YET are no humbugs half so vile as
these!—
I know them thoroughly — yes! if you
please—
The meanest hypocrites on earth are they,
They march in *crowds* upon the self-same
way!

To tell the truth to *others* is one thing!—
To *have it told back* is a *hideous
shame!*—
The one is even a *necessary* sting,
The other—just too villainous to name!

We've had "truth" told to us—no *end* of
times!
But when *we* told it *back* again "they"
used us

* "Oh! I'll speak my mind if I die for it!"—*Comic Song*.

As though we had committed *shameful*
crimes,
And in no measured language they
abused us!

Oh—yes! and in one thing we *quite* be-
lieve!

One—would you live in peace—you
needs must learn—

Blame—you must always modestly receive,
But—it's a gift *you never may return!*

AS IN THE DAYS OF OLD.

AYE! in these days, as in the days of old,
The tale of the self-righteous shall be
told,

Of those that still believe that there are
none

"Pure" as themselves beneath this
modern sun—

Old trees—old flowers—old types—they
still remain—

The fool yet sows his seeds upon the
plain,

And reaps but bitter fruits from earth's
bare soil—

While Patience labours at a nobler toil—

Oh! the sweet creatures, whose dear task
on earth

Is to turn *others'* errors into mirth,
Or everywhere to preach their fellows win
The prizes of this earth as "wage of
sin!—"

Who boast their hands are clean—even
that they

Have joined not in the battles of the day,
Except for self—and yet when *others* fail
Tell of them, scoffingly, an angry tale!

For in these days, as in the days of old,
The tale of the self-righteous shall be
told—

The tale of those who prate that there are
none

"Pure" as themselves, beneath this
modern sun!

LITTLE AIRS AND LITTLE LIVES.

A *little* authoress—(*I've seen the look,*
And smiled!) walks with the sweetly
conscious air

Of greatness — though the writer of
some book

Of feeble thoughts — and of *imagina-*
tion bare!—

A little singer hears her own poor strain
Of music, and is full of vain delight,
Nor dreams her false notes give another
pain,

Even as the screeching of an owl by
night!—

For oh! these smaller souls of earth—they
swarm!

And are of myriad paltry races winners!
See here in one, here in another form—

As authors, singers — pharisees and
sinners!

Yes! still the little heart will *quickest*
beat*—

And little people have most huge conceit—
And oh! the trivial lives—the trivial fates—
The feeble natures and their weakly
states!—

Our little ponds are thick with tiny frogs,
A million worms will intersect our bogs,
And paths of earth are veiled by count-
less weeds,

And man is burdened with his endless
needs!—

TO —?

AYE! all the world is feeble, foolish,
weak—

Except thyself, good friend!

Thou hast a pure soul and a spirit meek!
Nor any sin to mend!

And thou with wondrous insight, seest all
Men's crimes and follies here!

If any trouble doth *thy* path befall
'Tis not *thy* fault—'tis clear!

* "A little pot is soon hot"—old adage.

How good this wicked universe had been
 If *thou* had'st held its reins!
 How tranquil and how always fair the
 scene—

What sunlight on its plains!

If gladly had we all sat at thy feet,
 Only to hear thee preach!
 What lessons—all beneficent and sweet—
 Could'st thou not teach!

It is a thousand pities men *won't* see
 The greatness of thy soul—
 Yes! what a happy world this world might
 be
 If under *thy* control!

Alas! this world is but a foolish place,
 And holds to its own ways;
 And much I fear this wretched human
 race,
 Will never win *thy* praise!

TO THE RECLUSE.—I.

OH! you—who seem to dwell as in a hole,
 Who live as one who “hugs” a small
 retreat,
 We know few of a smaller, vainer soul,
 Or who *could* walk with more con-
 ceited feet!

Aye! there are few of earth I deem more
 small,
 Who yet appear to be so oddly vain,
 Whose form “most ludicrous” one needs
 to call
 As “mincingly” it steps upon earth's
 plain!

No! few, whose sharp and thin, whose
peevish voice
 Echoes less pleasantly through summer
 bowers—
 Or who could less in autumn's tints
 rejoice,
 Or in the beauty of her fruits and
 flowers!

Be not a figure only for our mirth,
 At which but with derisive eyes men
 gaze!—

Come forth and *do some good upon this
 earth,*
 And win respect if but in *autumn days!*

Seek thou for sunshine — not alone for
 night—
 For wholesome growth—and not destructive
 blight—
 Look for the noble soul, the lofty mind,
 All which, if sought for, thou shalt surely
 find!

ADVICE TO ONE “BETTER THAN THE REST.”

TAKE thou through life, an open, fearless
 way!
 Shrink not from storms that others
 bravely meet—
 Nor like the Pharisee sit down and pray,
 Where men may see, who pass with
 toiling feet.

Think not that, being “better than the
 rest,”
 You may not walk with them, nor share
 their work,
 See how *they* struggle on, although
 oppressed
 By heavy labours that *you* meanly
 shirk!

Man lives his life not for “himself
 alone”—
 The weak may need his help upon the
 way,
 If God hath given him strength beyond
 their own
 'Tis not for him at home in peace to
 stay!

Aye! I speak plainly, for I am ashamed
 Of all those “saintly” speeches about
 sin
 Oft made by those who ever virtue
 claimed
 Because they shrank from “worldly”
 strife and din!

It is no pagan world we live in here—
 A sinning brother is a brother still—
You shrink from duties to all others clear,
 Through feebleness both of your power
 and will!

TO THE RECLUSE.—II.

"No one can learn unselfishness that leads the life of a recluse. To live for others is to live with them and amongst them."—*My Mother's Diamonds*, by Maria J. Greer.

THEREFORE do some we know of—they who lead

The "life of a recluse"—the selfish life—

Whose hearts so little can for others bleed,
Who help them neither in their grief,
nor strife—

Who have a cold, a dull, a selfish heart,
Who take in others' troubles no kind part—
Say such "hard things" of them, as one
has heard;—

With souls by charity, alas! unstirred!

So they have said—a hundred times have said—

It is a world of feebleness—nay! worse—
A world full of unworthy inmates—spread
O'er all its face as an unending curse!
They cannot "live with, or amongst
them"—they

Look on them as things formed of other clay—

So these sweet souls avoid the atmosphere
Those others breathe, nor will their
presence near!

Oh! poor and selfish! — sure, the world
is wise

When it shuts sternly unto these its
homes—

And in its turn will loathe them—and
despise

Its foolish children; and as each one
comes

Into its varied paths, will move aside,
At least with cool contempt, if not with
pride—

And bid them take the mote from their
own eyes,

And grow more humble—therefore grow
more wise!

AYE! FEEBLE SOULS—

AYE! feeble souls—who brood in a "re-
treat"

And think it saint-like thus to live alone,

Who boast no feet are cleanly as *thy* feet,
No hands so really spotless as thine
own—

Give up this hideous folly—and believe
That there are others *quite* as good as
ye!

The showy robes of vanity ye weave
In one light, only, nobler souls can see!

Think not that thus to live as cowards,
makes

A claim upon the Father of the brave—
Shrinking from suffering for thy brothers'
sakes,

Thou winnest not respect from e'en the
slave!

Surely to help another in his care,
To shield him in the hour of his distress,
His heavy cross upon this earth to bear,
Is treading paths that Heaven will
richly bless!

Did Christ Himself not bear our load of
sin,

Doth it not teach us not our souls to
save

By living for ourselves!—not so we win
The crown that waits on some beyond
the grave.

GRATEFUL AND IMPRESSIVE
THANKS!

"Lord! I thank Thee I am *not* as other women!"

This is the "nice-and-oily" modern
prayer

That some one heard upon a woman's
lips!

She holds her garments high up in the
air

Lest on our unswept, muddy paths she
slips—

And lets the world look *sweetly* on her,
when

She walks abroad before the eyes of men!

"Lord! I thank Thee I am *not* as other
women!"

And of like modest souls a little knot
Doth gather and goes wandering o'er the
globe—

Intent on "showing-off" each luckless spot

That may be on a hapless sister's robe—
Aye! "showing-off" with scornful tones
and loud,—

To meet the jeering laughter of the crowd!
"Lord! I thank Thee I am *not* as other
women!"

Also—'tis often the delightful plan
Of these good creatures to point smartly
out

Whoso may luckless be, of modern man,
The "feeble" ones—the "rabble and
the rout,"

And with belief that all must needs ap-
plaud

Their ways—seeing they loudly thank the
Lord!—

"Lord! I thank Thee I am *not* as other
women!"

A FEW OBSERVATIONS.

Concerning the charges made by certain (*so-called*)
critics, that our books "reek with slander!" and are
"disfigured by spite."

How conscience pricks them! how is it
they take

Each so-called "slander" to *themselves*?
—Ha! Ha!

And that it is for his, or *her* sweet sake
We sing such scornful songs—Tra la! la!
la!

Aye! 'tis enough, methinks, to make one
blow

A somewhat loud, *authoritative* horn
To call the World's attention to the show,
That it may see what knaves to it are
born!

Tra! la! la!—listen, O my readers, all—
How should "*real*" critics know of
whom we speak—

Whom we "to book" so rightfully shall
call!—

Yet *dare* to say our works with slander
"reek!!"

Surely it is the rule of modern times—
(Of *all* times we would hope)—no judge
shall sit

To weigh the measure of men's faults and
crimes

If he is interested—the *least bit*!

And these, who speak of "slander" all
must see

Are interested—even themselves must be
The folks whom sternly we rebuked—
and not

Our critics, in the least!—A shady lot!!

IF YOU BUT KNEW!

If you but knew—O gentle public mine,
Who, and *what*, may our "so-called
critics" be,

You then might open those shrewd eyes of
thine,

And pretty little OBJECTS they would
see!

On paper, many critics have we met,
Neither conceited—ignorant—nor *weak*
In classics!—nor who o'er their grammar
fret!

Of these, good friends, with due respect
we speak!

Not on the mind of Innocence may strike
The truth—that knaves can wear the
true man's mask,

She reads all "critiques" as conceived
alike

By critics,—nor will awkward questions
ask!

Yet it were well that the untaught *should*
know,

Nay! they may almost hold it as a
right—

When they no critic read!—simply a foe—
Who—for a *reason*—keeps well out of
sight!

Aye! and reviews with no *reviewer's* pen,
Being not of the *higher* class of men,
Or women!!—those who—it is truth to
say

Do like to throw *their* mud upon *our*
way!

TO OUR READERS.

No! friends! — of no true critic do we write!—
But just of one, who slinking out of sight,
Lest any know his not *too* "honoured" name
Brings the profession that he apes to shame.

We say no more—not now would we disclose
What we were told of other craven foes—
That is—we shall not seek to argue, *here*,
The meanness of the envious soul's career—

Further than just this passing word to say—
That when one such believes his words shall weigh
Through being "unsigned" he shall but suggest
A not o'er noble or courageous breast!

He who dares not the eyes of men to meet—
Who finds it easiest in the dark to lie,
Knowing that he might figure as a cheat,
Did he stand forth beneath the open sky—

Aye! once more of this most unpleasant sneak
Not now—but in the future we may speak
More fully—and undoubted proofs will give
What mean, vile spirits in the shadows live!

"SO PERSONAL!"—I.

(SO CRIED ANONYMA—?)

A FOOLISH statement here would one amend—
'Twas *they* were personal—not I—good friend—
They who, with ignorance marked on each page,
Pursued us with such *very* pretty rage!

Revenge—as we now know—was once avowed
To be the longed-for wish of their sore hearts—
Revenge!! and if not *quite* proclaimed aloud
This wish was sent to us from many parts!

And sent not once—nor twice!—and sent one just
As an "alarm!"—just fancy!!—or maybe,
To humble one into the very dust!
Aye! even to those pretenders—*scorned* by me!

No critics—*honest* critics—understand!—
Especially not here of such we speak—
But of one writing with a furious hand
And blundering o'er his Latin and his Greek!*

"SO PERSONAL!"—II.

AYE—just "*so* personal"—were these poor souls!—
With their "reeking slanders" and "disfiguring spite"—
'Tis well they — *sometimes* — are called "o'er the coals,"
Coals that for *them* burn with too strong a light!

Let all at "*Versus a Woman Pro Women*" look—
For—we're informed—that is the luckless book
That—in the guise of the bull's "red rag," appears
To have caused such fearsome rage — shall we add—tears?

Say—in its length and breadth is there *one* word
In that book, my reader—*one*, of "personal spite"?
Oh! the cauldron of hot rage that once was stirred
They stirred themselves, with all their "main and might!"

* This was pointed out in another place.

Any might learn, with but *one* grain of thought,
That it was for *principle*—for *truth* we fought—
That the author blamed, in truth was nought to us—
But—that anger *blinds* is a fact need none discuss!

Oh! 'tis a funny story—one to make
The sides of Laughter mightily to shake!
And even still is the merry story told,
How the wolf, as a lamb, once hovered near our fold!

“UNDER WHICH KING,
BEZONIAN? SPEAK OR DIE”!

OR,

OUR CHAMELEON CRITIC!

The first criticism: “In the Watches of the Night.” “This writer’s poetry *is* poetry. . . . Her verses have a melody about them which will be found to be as captivating as it is charming. Her conceptions are lofty—her very ideas are poetical,” &c.—*Cheltenham Chronicle*.

The second criticism: “In the Watches of the Night.” “*Such* rhymed mediocrity are these ‘Watches of the Night!’”—*Cheltenham Chronicle*.

THE AUTHOR’S REMARKS!

JUST—by a mere mischance, from which no days

Of earth can be *protected*, as all know,
That first *sweet* critique, brimming o’er with praise,

Seeming quite written under a warm glow
Of admiration, only met my view
When one could scarcely call it fresh or new!—

But still, of *course*, it could but be delightful!—

So kind of you!—to say my poetry
Was poetry—*so* unlike some *most* spiteful!—

Truly more generous notice scarce could be!—

“Lofty conceptions—captivating—charming!”—

Such words were almost worthy of—em-balming!!

Who *could* dream that a “wind” like this would change
Completely to the North-east from the West!—

That after roving o’er so *sweet* a range
Of kindly words—good—better—even *best*,

Descending even from “lofty” heights—
you’d cry—
“*Such*” rhymes are but of “*mediocrity*!”

Upon my word you critics make me wonder!—

Who is it now dares as a judge to sit?—
What has become of great Macaulay’s thunder,

And glowing words of praise and pungent wit?

O critics! go—bake, brew, or sell good wine!—

These things ye *may* do—but touch never more

Ought that is, or that *may* be, work of mine,

Or each of ye shall be dubbed Ass, or Bore!

IN WHAT A DREARY LIGHT DO
YE APPEAR!

O CRITICS! Critics!—*so to call ye here—*
In what a dreary light do ye appear!
Only we hold, though such a post ye claim,
Ye have no right to use the critic’s name.

Egged on by *personal* dislikes and likes
Each one a blow at his own good name strikes—

Himself debarred from censure seems to feel,
And *eats his own words* with apparent zeal!

No critics they—we gladly do admit—
They education need, as well as wit!
Have even of *shrewdness* not too great a store,
Yet! they are simply foes and nothing more!

True judgments are by ridicule unswayed—
These, *unintentional neglect* has made

"Reverse their engines!"—What a funny tale
Although to see the fun perchance they fail!

Fierce words of scorn at us they seek to shy—

As they point out our "mediocrity!"—
Such angry blows succeeding smiles of praise

Might well a guileless, simple soul amaze!

PRETTY LITTLE FABLES!

Now let the legend here be told
Of how a petty tradesman bold,
And how a valiant city clerk—
(All working—*see* you—in the dark!)—
And how a woman—not *too* sweet,
Yet brimming over with conceit—
Resolved to *crush* a Poet—O!
And hoped the World wouldn't view it so!

Again—a funny little tale—
Of how a mighty—spiteful cat
Set up to judge a nightingale
Instead of watching for a rat!—
And how it tore her "music book"!—
Though now and then it peeped between
The leaves that—as a mouse it shook,
Still hoping that it worked unseen!—

Oh! oh! the oddest story quite—
And one that doesn't bear the light!—
So in the "dark" they sought to keep
That none might at their doings peep!
And comfortably hoping—each—
That none would of their antics *peach*—
Enjoying mightily their work,
Resolved their "duty" ne'er to shirk,
All "purring" with delightful glee—
As merry as they well could be!—

SEEST THOU NOT, GENTLE READER?

SEEST thou not, gentle reader—that we
run

What ever hath been, and *shall be*, we
fear),
The Poet's race beneath this earthly
sun—

A simple and yet much-abused career!

Gladly we own—full many hearts that beat,
Responsive to our songs — the spirit
sweet,
The thoughtful brain, and the reflective
mind,
Amongst our many critics do we find!

But seest thou not that crowd of angry
flies,

That trouble, but too often, the calm air
That poets love, "buzzing about" the
skies—

Until we "close our ears" with even
despair!—

Aye! when our plums are ripe behold a
cloud

Of these—intent on spoiling our best
fruits—

Nor yet to taste them do they seem too
proud,

Whenever their *mean* appetite it suits!

'Tis an old tale—and may be older yet!—
Be it about a Poet, or a Peach—

Of spirits that for evermore will fret
Because the fruit hangs high *above their*
reach!

ARE NOT QUACK CRITICS EVERY TRUE MAN'S FOE?

THINK *never* — while *pretenders* we ex-
pose—

That therefore we do prize not *honest*
praise:

Are not quack critics every true man's
foes?

Would they not throw discredit on the
ways

In which—the Public thinks—our critics
tread—

The ways of the fair brain and the cool
head?

Aye! would they not!—did authors never
show

A scorn that all mere vulgar quacks should
know!

Point out their unclean footsteps on the
way,

That is the "right of way" to *honest*
men,

Show how uneducated—all—are they—
And owners only of a vulgar pen!

Thus do we hold we do no useless thing,
Believing it to many but a gain,
To show that wasps are pitiless of sting,
That gnats may swarm upon a certain plain!
Yes! at all vile things would we "raise
a breeze"—
And our *pretended* critics are—of *these*!

OF THE "SCATHING REBUKE"!

"Writes with a purpose, her aims are lofty and worthy commendation. . . . The refinement of sentiment is as marked as the scathing rebuke of all that is sham and unreal."—*The West Bromwich Free Press*, May 8th, 1886.

IN these last words indeed is truth, my friend—
Thou, at the least, can'st fully comprehend,
Nor find it tax *thee* greatly to believe,
How this "scathing rebuke" would *some* receive!

It may be there are eyes so blind,—through spite—
They could not, if they would, see aught aright
Except *one* thing—that I *do* speak of *them*
When I hate—spite—malignity—condemn!

I hold it well this should be widely known—
Though for mine own poor self I care—not I—
Though they should cast at me the sharpest stone
That paves their unsweet yard—when passing by!

That I speak scorn of slanderer and sneak
Hath flushed with rage full many a mean cheek—
And they would *crucify* me, if they dared,
That I *truth*—of their *lying* paths declared!

"UNFROCKED!"

NOTE.—When monks disgraced their calling they were "unfrocked!" Why not treat in like manner some critics of our day?

YES! "too much frocked" art thou by
such sore feeling
About us, for a critic—thou, who art
So practised thy mean features in concealing,
And playing ever that unworthy part
That thou hast long elected here to play—
Again—why deem so "false" what here
we say?

Truly thou seemest one of those, all see,
To whom our strong words of contempt apply,
As judge thou could'st not *otherwise* well be—
As we no names rang out—beneath thy sky!—
For how else—tell us! could'st thou be so wise
As to deem *truths* that we declare are *lies*?

We have amongst *our* set no critics — *none*!—
We have walked other paths than you have done,
Therefore—whoso of *slander* speaks must know
Even our acquaintances — and be some foe
Who thinks that at *himself*, perchance, we aim,
And feels, one hopes, *some* sentiment of *shame*!

TO —.

CONCERNING CERTAIN BRASS PENS.

WE do not—never have—despised "their" criticisms
Because they love us not!—inquiring friend:—
Were they but full of clever witticisms,
Could one but on them honestly depend,
Did they prove that we might most surely find
Learning and shrewdness in their "critic-mind,"

Each strong, if sharp, review, I should
have prized,
And gladly been by Wisdom's pen ad-
vised!

But know you not—mere words of boiling
rage,
Such as some coarse, pretentious ways
adorn,
Could never blot the true reviewer's page,
He treateth such with but contempt and
scorn!

Moreover, knoweth *he* the road to
school!—
Nor doth forsake it e'en in a Review,
To pose as a conceited, stupid fool,
Who neither Latin, Greek, *nor* English
knew!

Meanwhile 'tis with no honest soul the
plan
To personally seek to wound—to prove
That he is simply the revengeful man,
(Or woman!)—spurred by anything but
love!!

Yes! he, the honest soul, can be no foe—
Whereas a sneak, the true path shall
disgrace!

He deals an open and *respected* blow,
And runs the warrior's open, fearless
race!

THE TIME'S NOT COME!

Oh! "in our sleeves" we smile not
seldom, when
We note the "critiques" of a certain
pen—
We know the sharp scratch of that quill
full well—
But whist! the time's not come *that* tale
to tell!

Again!—what should an *honest* critic know
About the character of any foe
Of ours!—If *he is of them* is he fit
Upon the calm seat of the judge to sit?

Aye! it can only be that those who spread
Such lies about our living and our dead,
Are even these so-called "critics"!—and
no more
Than wolves in the sheep's clothing—as
of yore!

Oh! but I could a "tale unfold" of
some!

But there's a time for all things—this is
not

The moment—no! the "hour-r is not y-yet
COME"

For the unveiling of a "vicious lot"!

Aye! in this case e'en melodrama may
Not hold its own—the subject is so poor!
'Tis simple duty *that* points out the way—
'Tis simple duty opens here the door!

I would they were less vulgar—for to
throw

Spears at such *very* common things as
these

Can surely make no hero's cheek to glow!
It may be needed—yet no war to please!

But we must take things as we find them
—small

And puerile things oft elbow out the
great—

A thousand little edifices fall
To one great tower, or pillar of the
State!—

Yes! we smile in our sleeves not seldom,
when

We note the "critiques" of a certain pen;
We know the sharp scratch of that quill
right well—

But whist! the time's not come *that* tale
to tell!

IN ANSWER TO A LETTER.

I DON'T assume, as one might say, to
fight

A woman—friend!—truly would rather
hope

It is a man, if well concealed from sight,
Who seems to use a somewhat lengthy
rope

To hang himself, with much resolve!—
and whom

'Tis not for us to save from such a doom!

For some time since "their own friends"
wrote to me

Confessing it was "*he*" who had
"elected"

To "hunt us down" — (with even a fiendish glee

It seemed — scarce from a *gentleman* expected!)

And make me wish I never had been born

To hold a pen and a book-shelf "*adorn*"!

Although this word could never have been theirs,

As you may well believe, O Public dear! Say! isn't it *sad* to think of all the cares

That we have brought them? though it scarce is clear

'Twas *our* fault;—as our Dickens used to say

"Kettle began"!—and did so—in our day!

STILL—ONE MAY GUESS!—

STILL—one may *guess*—what pens are those that write

Those "notices" of anger, rage, and spite!

Reviews they can't be called—but one may trace

A great deal of wild blundering in their place!

Have they not sworn, we say—to use their powers

To blast the character of aught of "ours," Be it in poetry—be it in prose—

Declaring that they are our life-long foes!

Was this not told to us—aye! *by their friends*?—

Nor yet in such a *very* antique day!

'Tis futile any one of these pretends

To be an honest critic—one *must* say!

One understands them well, and can but smile

To recognise that *ungrammatical* style!—

To note that vain endeavour to disguise *That* pen they think so clever and so wise!

Oh! each may date from whereso'er he pleases,

But still, one smells the Rancid Oil that greases

That hand, or it may be, those hands of theirs—

Ever the most unpleasant of "affairs!"

Aye! For as we have often said — one likes

An open foe—one fearing not the light— Not one who with a poisoned weapon strikes,

And grimly keeps away from all men's sight!

OUR "OLD CRITIC" UP AGAIN!

I.

Vol. IX. of "In the Watches of the Night."—
"Verse after verse of the most violent abuse. Why 'ourselves' is italicised we fail to see. . . . Utterly uninteresting to the ordinary reader."—
Westminster and Lambeth Gazette, January 30th, 1886.

THINK you, when we have read such words as these,

That nothing of contempt our bosom stirs!—

Rather that we should say "Oh! if you please,

We thank you for your critiques — *learned* Sirs!"

How much of careful observation—wit

And learning beamed from every word we read!

On what a Throne must *one* "reviewer" sit,

How far, indeed, above the author's head!

What learning hath he shown in Latin, Greek!

Aye! and still more in his own native tongue!

Too highly of his brains can any speak?

By us his merits also need be sung!

He is *original*, besides!—the same,

The very same verse that one sees him treat

To such a fierce amount of rage and blame

Another hath described as "true and sweet!"

For one, see you, *is* critic—and the other Writes with a *personally* bitter pen—

And being "masked" he thinks he need
not smother
His rage, but growls as tiger from his
den!

OUR "OLD CRITIC" UP AGAIN!

II.

"Contains violent abuse—utterly uninteresting!"
&c. (See preceding page.)

O ANGRY one, and never critic—thou—
Why thus betray thyself!—we'd rather *not*
So plainly read those lines upon thy brow,
And know the meaning of each wandering
shot,
Or rather should we *pellet* call it—aimed
So wildly at us—and *yet never claimed*!

If thou an *ordinary* reader wert
These verses had—so thou thyself hast
said,
Been "utterly uninteresting"—hurt
They could not, any stranger who hath
read,
As thou may'st see by critique quoted
under! *
It is a pity thou must *always* blunder!

Thou hast "italicised" *thyself*—methinks
In pointing out, with such o'erboiling
rage,
Verses that sting thy soul and from which
shrinks
Thy conscience—seeming stung by every
page
Of ours: as to *thyself* thou takest *all*
Of sharp contempt that from our pen may
fall!

We do remember thee as the first wild
And furious critic who "came to the
fore,"
And at whose frenzied state so many
smiled
In days thou can'st not view as days—
of yore,
Our, "*Versus a Woman*" Critic — don't
you know—
That made such streams of boiling lava
flow!

Go! calm thyself and turn away thine eyes
From every "too-too" tempting page of
ours—
See if with age thou can'st not grow more
wise,
And spend not on "reviews" thy "feeble"
powers!
Then skies may clear again—and on thy
way
May shine the sunlight of a happier day!

SO YOU QUITE "FAIL TO SEE!"

So! you quite "fail to see"!—and what
is more,
Thinking you speak out of great Wisdom's
store,
You cannot note what others note—at
once!
And that is—that you figure as a
DUNCE!

Had you not "failed to see," in your own
glass,
(A thing that yet you should right often
see!)—
The mean reflection of a silly ass,
Not on our paths a fool's footsteps
might be!—

No doubt it is a melancholy tale—
That all things you see through one
angry *blur*—
Therefore there is no doubt but that you
"fail"
To see "that pretty" face of "him"—
or "her"!—

As Carlyle in curt language might have
said—
Recalling one who "shams" so strongly
hated—
Who poured his vials of wrath upon each
head,—
Their meanness so much on his spirit
grated!—

Thistles, we know, are much loved by
your kind,
Who dwell on plains o'er which they
thickly grow—

* "The contents are characterised by great variety, and the subjects chosen are treated artistically and pleasantly."—*Tiverton Gazette and East Devon Herald*, January 30th, 1886.

To fields of golden kingcups they are blind—

Nor hear the streams that freshly through them flow!

Yes! so you "fail to see"!—and what is more,

Thinking you speak out of great Wisdom's store

You cannot note what others note—at once!—

And that is—that you figure as the DUNCE!

A PITIABLE "FAILURE"!

A PITY 'tis, he should so troubled be
Because this *little* thing he "fails to see!"
For there were *other* things that *may* be more

Important, that his eyes "passed lightly o'er"!

You "fail to see" the goodness of thy kind—

Art to their many virtues sadly blind—

You "fail to see" that women may be pure—

That thy injustice to them you should cure—

You "fail to see" Life is a grander thing
Than a mere weed on a neglected plain—
Where there are crowds of hungry gnats to sting—

Where there is draught, or pitiless cold rain—

You "fail to see" the countless lives laid down

To win a higher and a brighter crown
Than any human hands can ever give,
While our few hours upon this earth we live!

You "fail to see"—(and this have many done)—

The incompleteness of all lives below
When spent on *Self*—the feeble race *they* run

Who only their own deeds of virtue know!

BUT—WHO IS THIS?

BUT—who is this who dares not give his name,

Lest it should bring him, it might be, to shame—

Who fights one fearless and is so afraid?

Who fights in shadow—yet is so dismayed!—

Aye! who is this who dares not to be seen—

Aye! who is this who played a part so mean—

And who a veil o'er all his features wore
While at a woman's stern rebuke he swore?

Who is it who so reckless is of lies—

Who writes as though himself, alone, were wise—

Who shrieks his charges with a voice but feigned,

Lest, on their falseness, *he* should stand arraigned?

Sneaks! Sneaks! how many are there on this earth—

Many who move to scorn and more to mirth—

Aye! *open* foes, methinks, might almost please—

If but by contrast with mean things like these!

Yes! who is this who dares not give his name,

Lest it should bring him, it might be, to shame—

Who fights one fearless and is so afraid?

Who fights in shadow—yet is so dismayed!—

A HOME QUESTION!

AGAIN—why by "*italics*" seem so *hurt*?

In this case be content!—they were not meant

For your "sweet *self*!"—so be thou not alert

In bringing down on them thy *punishment*!!

"*Uncalled for*"—surely *you* a *spirit* are!—
 Would we might say a *good* one—but, *alas!*
 Your *own* deeds such a *kindly* judgment
bar—
 So we may not a *lenient* sentence *pass!*

You're wiser than *last* time when you *confessed*
 You "*failed to see*" for whom we had
 intended

Our words of *scorn*, and even seemed *distressed*
 That your own *ignorance* might not be
mended!—

But *now* you figure as *all-knowing*—you—
 The "*Critic*"—walking in a *slipshod*
shoe—

"*Uncalled for*—those *italics*"—thou art
droll—

Aye! truly quite the funniest old soul!

Have you read, *never*, Shakespear—he who
 used

Italics freely—whereas we do *not!*
 But 'tis "*all one*"—we needs must be abused
 By you—you and yours seem the queerest
 lot!

OUR LIVELY CRITICS!—I.

"*Poems of Sorrow and Prayer*" . . . '*Hints*
 from an Old Ghost,' '*Darkest before Dawn*'
 . . . Show versatility—if nothing else. . . .
 We need say no more than that the present instal-
 ment is up to the former mark."^{*}

WHAT you said before, *alas!* we do not
 know—

We have read as yet no word of thine—
 except

What you *may* have written of "*fatal*
facility"—Lo!

How often—unknown to us—you may
 have wept!

Aye! *how* it hath hurt thee! — "*Versa-*
tility,"

And "*fatal facility*"! —added to which
 Is a "*ludicrous love of italics*"! —they
 must sigh

Till their sides no doubt, quite suffer
 from a *stitch!*

Seest thou, O reader! —the two books
 classed together!—

One is the "*wise words*" — of the
Ethiop!—

This with the "*poems of prayer*" do they
 tether,

And tying them both with the same
 well-tarred rope!

Yes! the poems of sorrow, suffering and
 prayer,

Are the same to them as the words of
 light reproof—

For they bring to them the same sad
 crown of care,—

As we hear meanwhile the clang of the
 ass's hoof!—

Oh! what shall we do with such *queer*
 souls as these?

Thou seest, O gentle Public, it were
 vain

To attempt these tender little minds to
 please—

Whatever we do is *sure* to give them
 pain!

And the only use that one of these can
 make

Is to show them up for someone else's
 sake!—

Who may not be *quite* as "*bomb-proof*"
 as are we—

And reveal how "*make believe*" *our*
 critics be!

OUR LIVELY CRITICS!—II.

SUCH critics as these must think themselves
so wise

That they need not do as *others!* —
 criticise!

But class together as very much the
 same

All *sorts* of books, nor hang their heads
 with shame!

Good Lord—Thou hast sent full many
 fools to earth

As a contrast to its wealth of "*noble*
ones!"—

As the vile make worth appear of greater worth

As our rushlights make more brilliant seem our suns!

Yet the fools are useful—"up to a point" you know—

It is well the simple-minded ones to show That *certain* "reviewers" are *not* reviewers at all—

But "Humpty-Dumpties, sitting on a wall!"

And alas! there would soon arrive an end to that

Did you give to each of these a gentle *pat*,

And looking down you would meet what always tells

Of a thing unfragrant — hidden within shells!!

Aye! again — what shall we say, good friends, to this—

A review upon two volumes—one the other

As unlike as—may sorrow be to bliss—

Or as may be the "white man" to his dusky brother!

Oh! the scent! the scent!—but that point pass we o'er—

For the time *may* come when it is smelt no more!

But as to their snub to "Darkest before Dawn,"

Oh! dear, what idiots unto earth are born!

SOME MAY HAVE HEARD—

SOME may have heard how much we seem to vex

Certain sweet souls by praising our own sex—

And how these gather all the mud that they

Have near *their* homes to throw upon *our* way!

Sweet souls are these! — and full of Christian love!—

And had it not been that we stand above

Their platform, so they *could* do us no hurt,

We had been daubed by handfuls of vile dirt!

Aye, truly do we stand beyond the reach Of the malicious aim of all and each

Of these, who by thus dabbling in bad soil,

Their own paths, and not ours, so often spoil!

'Twas their delight—aye! quite a "way they had"—

All things about them had an unsweet savour—

Such rather in mean garments had been clad

Than in the fair, sweet robes that *others* "favour"!

Aye! sometimes we do quote the phrases these

Delight in — certes not *their* souls to please—

But to th' initiated to make clear

What foul mists hang o'er *certain* folk's career!

ALL SORTS!

THEY say all sorts of lying things!—you know,

Against our books—yet they can never show,

Not even by *one* quotation — that they speak

The truth — and don't themselves foul slander shriek!

They may say ought is lying—if they please,

About all things that are in earth or sky—

Swear that the moon is made of a "cream cheese,"

Or that to call it *solid* is a lie!

Nothing is easier than false notes to strike, Or for mean souls to spread an untrue tale—

Our fools may do it whensoever they like— Nor in such "liking" will they often

"fail!"

Although—one notes—he often “fails to see”
 As he would phrase it—what a fool is he!
 Therein, we know, shall he and all his kind
 Figure, on earth, as *curiously* blind!

But will the *World* believe him and his lies—
 Is it—despite its years—so still unwise
 As thus in a “false prophet” to believe?—
 Forgetting 'tis his *glory* to deceive!

Aye! so these think—deeming some knaves and fools,
 Who of their own kind even, are the tools!
 “A vile world this” — they cry — “that rolls below
 The sun—full of Conceit—in Wisdom slow!”

SOMETHING “HIGHLY AMUSING!”

“Her verses are spent in vilifying unfavourable critics, who, should they ever chance to come across these lines will doubtless find them highly amusing—for the author is quite original in these spasmodic bursts of rage.”—June, 1886.

METHINKS that your complaints, seem hardly fair!
 Roundly have you abused me—and declare
Now what I sing is “balderdash”—complain
 Next 'tis “rhymed mediocrity” — then cry
 I write in an “abusive,” angry strain—
 Next that my verse lacks “interest” you sigh! *

You boast, to “foreign lands,” of England's Press,
 That it is *Free*—and point with scorn to theirs—
 You boast of open warfare, scorn no less
 The vile assassin — lurking on dark stairs,
 Hoping, unseen, to stab—and proudly say
 That open fight marks ever *England's* way!—

That in your Parliament each man may stand
 In sight of all his fellows—to defend
 Himself—and signal out, with scornful hand,
 Less noble states—as he upholds his friend
 And fights his foe—yes! scornfully he points
 At *others'* craven paths, as he anoints
 Himself thus with the oil of much self-praise—
 While crying up our open, fearless ways!

Yet you keep up an institution, *quite*
 Of olden times, my friend—the Inquisition!
 Your features—see you—are well veiled from sight,
 As you send all you *love* not to perdition!

And, while *you* are a nameless, hidden foe,
 Blame *us*, who *never* strike a *sneaking* blow—
 Aye! and will blame again—'tis not the last
 That we shall hear of a most furious blast
 That comes from certain quarters of the sky—
 But—'tis our “Dickens-plan”—*never to say die!*

“CATCH THE TIDE AT THE TURN!”

A spinster's seriously-given advice to marriageable young girls, put into fanciful verse to *soften its rudeness* a little!

LOOK out, young girls, look out — the tide's a-flowing!
 We know too well we can't depend on water!
 Look out, you girls — for Time, stern Time's a-going—
 Show us that each of you is Eve's own daughter!
 Don't ask where it may lead you, foolish girl—
 While you are ‘bothering’ *that* tide may turn!

* The complaints referred to in these lines did not all appear in one and the same paper, but being singularly marked by the same “amusing” spirit, we have placed them together.

No matter if your head *is* in a whirl—

To be *quick* is the one thing you must learn!

Oh! many an one—(alack! do *we* not know it!—)

O'erstands her early *market* — as it were—

And then *that* wrinkle—she can't help but show it!

And then *that* white thread—shining in the hair!

Oh! catch the tide—*look sharp* and catch the tide!

For what is 'delicacy'—now-a-days?

Don't let the wave go back—(forget all pride!)

Unless it also bears *you*—on 'your ways!'

For you are *too* fastidious — you who wish

To banish not the blushes from your face—

Look out — young girls—look out, and *catch your fish!*

To let 't escape were a life-long disgrace!

And if you fancy *we* have practised not (Though in its doing failed!) what here we teach,

'Twas but the misfortune of our lot,
From which we now would save you—
all and each!

Aye, girls!—look out, and catch the tide,
ere turning,

' Don't lose the chance if e'er it is your own—

Oh! don't defer so wise a lesson learning,
Or you'll be left upon the sands alone!"

So look out—all you girls—the tide's a-flowing—

We know too well we can't depend on water,

Look out—you girls — for Time, stern
Time's a-going,
Show us that each of you is Eve's own
daughter!" *

A QUESTION RAISED BY THE PRECEDING!

HAVE women lost their sweetest charm of old—

And in that loss are taught a *pride*—we ask!

And shall we bid them learn that to be bold

In "catching tides" should now be their dear task?

And is the peach *more* fair because we brush

Away the bloom that gladdens gentle eyes?—

Aye! so a cheek that hath forgot to blush

Be one that we most tenderly should prize!

And shall the fragrant, modest violet

No longer shelter under leaves of green?—

And shall our delicate wild roses fret
Because by the gay universe unseen?

And shall our women flaunt about the beach
Of matrimony's sea—the "tide to catch!"

And eagerly across its waters reach

A sister's *spoils*, as it might be—to *match?*

And shall we banish "delicacy" now,

As a word obsolete — from modern speech?—

And scorn the shame upon a modest brow,
And the new doctrine of "coarse—
daring" teach?

* This offensive—not to say indelicate, advice on the subject of marriage (*i.e.*, to "catch the tide at its turn") actually issued from the pen of a feminine writer! We remember that something of the same kind of *refined* advice was given by a worldly mother to her daughter, in "Fashionable Tales," one of Maria Edgeworth's works. "Many a heart, my dear," she said, "is caught at the rebound!" Miss Edgeworth—a very proper-minded lady did not draw this "plain-spoken" spinster in the very sweetest and most delicate of colours,

"NIGHT INTERPRETED TO ME!"

I.

An answer to the "critic" who sweetly advised us
to choose some other time than the night in which, he
contemptuously added, "*to pen our fancies.*"

"In broad daylight yesterday
I read a Poet's mystic lay,
And it seemed to me at most
As a phantom or a ghost.

* * * * *

Then the moon in all her pride,
Filled and overflowed the night,
With revelations of her light,
And the Poet's song again
Passed like music through my brain;
Night interpreted to me
All its grace and mystery."

LONGFELLOW.

THOU hast spoken well, indeed!—
Not in garish daylight read
Tender fancy—glowing thought,
From the land of spirits brought!

Not when labour's voice is loud,
Not from out the busy crowd,
Not upon the noon-tide skies
Shall the poet's song arise—

Not when sounds of bitter strife
Echo through this stormy life—
When the voice of sad lament
Through the troubled air is sent—

Wait!—until the calm midnight—
Wait!—until the stars are bright—
Wait—to hear the wind's low sigh,
As the dusky bats flit by—

Wait—to hear the tender tale
Told by song of nightingale—
Then through silent wood and lane,
Soft shall pass the Poet's strain!

"NIGHT INTERPRETED TO ME!"

II.

Again— "The Poet's mystic lay!—

* * * * *

Night interpreted to me
All its grace and mystery."

LONGFELLOW.

AYE!—"Night interpreted to me,"
As to all of poet-mind,

All her "grace and mystery,"
In the hours when slept the "blind"—

When the earth with light is full—
With the light that is not day—
Through the hours when rest the dull
Sweetly rings the poet's lay—

Ears unvexed by worldly sounds,
Troubled not by clash of wars,
As they go their magic rounds
Listen to the race of stars.

Crowns of gold shall then seem dim,
And the soul hath time to rest—
And to lift the thoughts to Him
Who the world with light hath blessed—

With thy cool breath on his brow,
With thy peace that *is*—not *seems*,
True interpreter art thou,
O Night! of all a poet's dreams.

TAKING THE BLAME ON
ONESELF!

"Here is good stuff for sixpence! It says little
for the literary taste of the age that a poetess of such
merit should have to publish her works at a price
which one would give to a crossing-sweeper!"—*The
People*, January 17th, 1886.*

MY friend!—if fault there be that fault
is mine!—

Whose strong ambition was to reach a
class
To whom each sixpence hath the guinea
shine

In value—and not o'er the poor to pass.

A feeling for the calm rest of the night,
Or for the passing grandeur of a storm—
In beauty and in silence to delight,
Seeking for loveliness, in every form—

A love of nature and a deep-set scorn
For any covert and revengeful ways,
For paths by Pharisaic footsteps worn,
For voices that are full of self-appraise—

These feelings are not to the rich con-
fined—

Aye!—by no means—observant eyes de-
clare—

* On the Sixpenny Edition of some of the Authoress's Poems.

Nor to the "noble's" cultivated mind,
 Nor to the soul full of ambitious care—
 Therefore we, also, write for those to
 whom
 Something is missed with every sixpence
 spent,
 Though on a book, or on a rose's bloom—
 On aught, alas! not food, or clothes,
 or rent!

BELIEVING IN NO NOBLE TALES OF OTHERS.

So pass some evil natures through the
 Vale
 Of tears—believing in no noble tale
 Of others—mocking legends full of glory—
 Their own—a sad, humiliating story!

No proper training any can display,
 They vow, who walk not in that *special*
 way
 Selected by these "Christians," as the
 sweet
 And true!—that it is trodden by *their* feet!

Such souls are *poor* almost beyond belief—
 Above one level they can never rise—
 Nor have they faith in any stranger's grief,
 Nor can they ever breathe unselfish
 sighs—

Incapable as these have ever been
 To do for others charitable deed
 Wonder thou not that these are rarely
 seen,
 If ever!—for another's griefs to bleed!

Truly they weep not for their brothers'
 woes,
 They cannot comprehend them—no! not
 they!
 So pass their selfish hours—until the close
 Of their unsympathetic—selfish day!

TRULY NEED YE COMPASSION—

To —.

AND yet need ye compassion—true and
 strong!
 Who through these years could never
 understand

The meaning of the nightingale's sweet
 song,
 Of Love's rich music—thrilling through
 the land.

One feels the lives of such must needs be
 sad,
 Seeing from them Love's glorious eyes
 are veiled—
 That never through their brightness are
 they glad—
 That on their paths *its* light hath surely
 paced.

More would I pity you did ye not dare
 To speak of lands through which you
 have not been,
 As though they were not fruitful, broad
 and fair,
 But rather of a dull, or unreal scene.

One grieves for the unfortunate—but yet
 Shall scarcely mourn for any who main-
 tains
 Because *they* glorious Love have never
 met,
 Therefore *its steps* have left our woods
 and plains!

Yes—that because *their* skies are dull, o'er-
 cast—
 Their vales and hills are flowerless, and
 o'er
 Their dreary lives Love's breath hath never
 passed,
 Therefore it dwells upon our earth no
 more!

THE VOICES OF THE WISE.

ALAS! for the voices of the wise,
 Though they be tender, sweet and
 strong,
 Yet the voice of fools, beneath the skies,
 Oft overpowers earth's fairer song—

And oh! for the swarms of gnats below,
 For the crowds that breed, of lower
 things,
 And a myriad insects come and go,
 Though still o'erhead the sky-lark
 sings—

And a world of little fish may come
 And swim about in the mighty sea—
 But the fishes, happily, are dumb,
 As I would that fools might also be!

But a king may sit on a lofty throne
 And yet by a flea be troubled still—
 Through the world that is the poet's own
 May echo the owl's wild shriek of
 ill!

And echo shall often bring from day
 The voice of the liar upon his way—
 And the weasel stealeth out by night—
 Though the stars o'erhead are fair and
 bright—

So—woe for the voices of the wise—
 Though they may be tender, sweet, and
 strong,
 Yet the voice of fools rending the skies,
 Oft overpowers earth's fairer song!

THE VOICES OF OUR KNAVES.

AND the voices of our knaves, mean-
 while,
 Are loud on the earth—as loud as vile—
 'Tis a thought disturbing to the brain
 How often the wise must needs complain—

Yet—though shall our fools attempt to
 spoil
 The fairest haunts of the wood and plain,
 Shall the noble labourer sweat and
 toil,
 Nor ever shall be his labour vain?—

Oh! suffer ye not—pale poet—though
 Thy tasks on the earth are incomplete,
 Though the vipers cross thy paths below,
 And their slime is on the flowers most
 sweet—

If the weeds of earth spring up apace,
 Though over their leaves hath passed the
 plough,
 And cover many a fair, sweet place,
 Let it bring no trouble to thy brow—

For the true and the holy and the
 wise
 There is love and rest beyond the skies—
 And the evil—as the faithful—trust
 Are dust, and they shall return to dust!

MUSING.

'Tis sweet to wander where the pine wood
 lifts
 Its sombre brow against the evening
 sky—
 To look up to the white and silent cliffs,
 And catch the sea-gulls' weird and
 distant cry—

'Tis sweet to wander where the streamlet
 flows
 Through banks on which the fragrant
 wild-rose blushes—
 And where, in clear and sparkling water,
 grows
 The noble "flowering rush"—the Queen
 of rushes!*

Here even might the weary soul be glad—
 Aye! Peace is here if it be found be-
 low—
 The world's great echoes are but faint, if
 sad,
 Only—eternal waters ebb and flow!—

Here might one sit and muse, yet muse in
 vain,
 Upon the meaning of this life of ours,
 The darkness—the unequal load of pain,
 The fair lives blighted and the wreck
 of powers.

God knows what is to be the end of
 strife,
 And of the life-long prayers for sweet
 peace!
 Longings that are for ever linked with
 life,
 And rest unsatisfied—when life shall
 cease!

* This handsome flowering, and by no means common, rush, grows in one or more of the rivers in the neighbourhood of Bournemouth.

AYE! SO SHALL MARCH THE
WORLD.

AYE! so shall march the world—and side
by side,

Hustling each other on its platform,
move

The craven spirit, and the soul of pride,
Hate's loathsome shape, and the fair
form of Love.

Here Genius sits upon his lofty throne,
Surviving storm and darkness—chill and
blast—

See bitter Envy cast at him that stone,
To gnash her teeth that it in vain is
cast!

From earth's broad breast spring mingled
weeds and flowers,
And poisoned herbs, as, also, gracious
fruit—

And even in the nightingale's green bowers
Will hide the worm, the adder, and the
newt.

And ever marching o'er the same great
plain
Of Life, go forth the cowardly—the
brave—

But they shall seek a different goal in vain,
All paths of earth lead ever to the
grave—

And from the new as from the old church
towers

The marriage bells ring gaily on the air,
Only for men to hear, in sadder hours,
The knell that speaks to some but of
despair!

IN THE CALM, AND OTHER POEMS

"Midnight, universal midnight reigns."
YOUNG'S "Night Thoughts."

"An hour when Heaven's most intimate with man."
Ibid.

“Night unnumbered worlds unfolds to view—
 “O ! majestic Night—
 “Nature’s great ancestor—Day’s elder born !”
Ibid.

"Night opes the noblest scenes."—*Ibid.*

"Gentle Night, whose beams
Give us a new creation."—*Ibid.*

“Darkness, aiding intellectual light
And sacred silence,—whispering truths divine.”—*Ibid.*

"As when a traveller, a long day past,
 . . . at Night's approach
 . . . ruminates a-while." *Ibid.*

"How like a widow in her weeds, the Night
Amid the glimmering tapers silent sits!"—*Ibid.*

INTRODUCTION.

1886.

OH! in the calm, the wonderful, sweet
calm

Of these old woods, that seem so
strangely far
From turmoil and from grief—that have
a balm

To heal the wounded soul—and where
the star
Of evening looks into uplifted eyes—
And where the deep roar of earth's cities
dies—

Aye! in these lonely woods we think of
spheres

That shall be far more beautiful than
ours—

Where love may reign—where there shall
be no tears,
And where shall be no wars of evil
powers—

Where fruits shall ripen and where flowers
shall grow,
Where summer smiles — where there is
never woe—

Oh! shall we meet our dear ones there,
once more,
To look back on this earth as sad dreams
past!—

Full grateful that those bitter dreams are
o'er.

That rest for troubled souls is found at
last—

Rest! rest! and rest with God—and this,
we trust,
Shall be the new birth from our mortal
dust!

IN THE CALM.

AYE! in the calm have passed some days
of life.

When but to live was all we asked—no more!

When we forgot earth's elements of strife,
The waves that break upon its stormy
shore,

The pitfalls that beset the careless feet—
The shadows that more searching eyes
might meet—

Sweet days—fair days—beyond all lips
could tell

Of the soul-rapture that filled every
nerve,

Aye! with no echoes of life's dreary knell,
A feast of ecstasy—with Love to serve—
And with her deep and tender songs to
thrill

Upon the ear, while life's fierce storms
were still—

Sweet days ! fair days !—and if a cloud of
care

Seems sometimes on her widest plains
to rest,

To even *know* that earth can be so fair
Is to be one of those whom she hath
blessed !

Oh! sorrow, and pain's bitter "after-
blast"
Shall never make forgotten life's sweet
past!

YES! THERE ARE DAYS OF EARTH—

YES! there are days of earth that glow
with light,
Scented by many of earth's sweetest
flowers—
Dark days are, also—full of storm and
blight,
Cold with north winds, or with un-
sparing showers—

Fields of rich soils are over-run with
weeds—
Nightshade in hedges of the sweetbriar
grows—
Here is good corn and here but pungent
seeds—
Only one, wise, their use and purpose
knows—

Red apples glow upon the orchard trees,
The sunbeams on their ripened colours
shine—
And bitter crabs fall down before the
breeze,
And feed the greedy mouths of herds of
swine—

Here stands an angel with its wings of
white,
And here One—"fallen" shadows the
deep skies,
And throws the gloom of a Satanic night
Upon the earth that far below him
lies—

Thereon walk mortals of a bitter mind,
Seeking for traces of the foul and vile—
But those of sweeter souls shall surely find
Bowers in this universe lit with God's
smile!

HERE DWELLETH PEACE!

HERE dwelleth peace!—here are no bitter
tones
Of envy—nor yet sorrow's heavy moans—

But grateful for the hour of rest and love
Sit we 'mid flowers—the calm, blue sky
above!

Here dwelleth peace—amongst these happy
trees

Is heard the gentle whisper of the breeze;
Not *that* the "croak of raven" that we
hear!—

But song of thrush—or blackbird—sweet
and clear—

Here dwelleth peace—the roses show no
blight—

No rude hands dare to stain the lily's
white—

The grapes are covered with a purple-
blue—

The ripe plums sparkle with the evening
dew—

Here dwelleth peace—we hear but gentle
rain;

Not hailstones falling sharply on the
plain;

The sun goes down into the ocean's bed—
Bright to the last—not with an angry
red—

Here dwelleth peace, tranquillity and rest—
The ships move onward o'er that ocean's
breast—

Under a calm and holy heaven we sleep—
And close the tired eyes that no longer
weep!

THE FIR TREE'S EVER-PLAINTIVE SIGH!

HEAR'ST thou that fir tree's ever-plaintive
sigh,

As fitful breezes through it softly pass,
Scented with rose-leaves!—slowly then to
die,

While casting dead leaves gently on the
grass!

Hear'st thou, afar, the low voice of the
sea,

That ever seemeth to itself to sing!—
Nearer—the titmouse twittering in the tree,
Not startled by the squirrel's passing
swing!

Seest thou the swallow with uncertain
flight
Still passing to and fro, beneath the
sky?

Crossing—re-crossing in the purple light
That tinges every fleecy cloud on high!

Seest thou that butterfly — of brilliant
“eyes,”

Resting on the last roses of the year—
And living still beneath uncertain skies,
Aye! living still, though some few leaves
are sere—

And here behold one of our “busy
bees”——

Its cheerful hum still falling on the
ear,
So other fair, sweet trifles, even as these,
Tell how sweet autumn loves to linger
here!

O’ER THE BLUE WATERS—

O’ER the blue waters came a gentle
song,
That made one dream of days for ever
past;

Tenderly—lovingly it swept along,
Then died—for ever died away—at
last!

Yet with a thousand memories it filled
The silence, known not in the calm
before,
That as they passed, even in that passing
thrilled
With tones remembered, yet which were
—no more!—

Strange—that a simple song should thus
awaken
The thoughts—ambitions—of departed
years;

Strange—that the inmost soul should thus
be shaken
By the mere memory of long dried-up
tears!—

All things eternal seem, except our joys,
And these shall meet an universal
doom—

One breath—one bitter breath our rose
destroys,
But sorrow weeps for ever by its
tomb—

And yet I listened to that mournful
song
Until it into distance passed away;
Its time to rest with us already
o’er,
Darkness and silence settled on the
shore.

O RESTFUL HOURS OF EVENING!

O RESTFUL hours of evening—when the
cries
Of earth are lost in calm and darkening
skies,
And when the world, with watchful
heavenly love,
Is lit by the fair lamps that hang
above—

Musing — we see Thy lessons here are
meant,
O God!—for help as even for punish-
ment—
They come as seasons—now so bright and
sweet,
Now killing the fair flowers around our
feet!

Thou teachest us the faithlessness of
hearts,
And of the Liar biddest us beware—
The seeming friend—who from thy hearth
departs
When Grief hath taken up her dwelling
there!

Yet if such knowledge to our souls is
brought—
Knowledge with sorrow limping in her
train—
So hast Thou countless tender lessons
taught,
Aye! lessons that have not been taught
in vain!

Thine eyes have looked down from the
realms above—

Earth hath known Thy creative, glowing
breath—

Thou hast shown us the faithfulness of love—
The heart that can endure—endure till
death!

Yes! and this compensates for all of woe
That Thou permittest on this earth
below!—

So long as love is sent from Thee, O
God,

Shall roses sanctify this earthly sod!

MANY LESSONS.

FOR many lessons are we thankful here,
O God!—Who sent us to these earthly
plains—

Not always is the reading thereof clear
To our imperfect—to our weary brains,
Yet time hath often brought us proof,
through years

Sometimes of patience—sometimes but of
tears!—

The pharisaic soul hath been laid bare
Before our eyes of loathing and of
scorn—

The thing that outside once appeared but
fair

Hath had the veil from well-known
features torn—

Those features still are in their ancient
mould,

As “sanctified”—repulsive—as of old—

The “judges” told of, once, in Holy Writ,
Still on the seat of judgment grimly sit:
Aye! but one *also* knows the strong and
pure,

The soul that nothing from brave paths
can lure,

The unstained brow, the glance from loving
eyes—

These still are found beneath earth’s
radiant skies.

MUSING.

How many pass from this terrestrial life
Their memory damaged by revengeful
lies—

Misunderstood in peace, slandered in strife,
Their honest fame, but not their false
one, dies!

No one shall do his duty, here on earth,
Or step out boldly from the common
path,

But he by some is met with sneering
mirth,

By others with the words of spite and
wrath.

Few shall the lofty mountain peak attain,
Though they may seek it in the earliest
dawn,

Without a venture through some poisoned
plain,

Where they by snakes are stung, by
briars are torn—

There may be in another world, fair
skies—

There may be in another world, bright
faces—

Realms where is neither envy—spite—nor
lies—

But only gentle words and sunny
places—

So—hope!—for it shall lighten much the
gloom,

And be as summer’s breath upon thy
ways—

Shine as a very halo o’er the tomb,
Cheering all anxious eyes that thereon
gaze.

LINES TO THE DESPONDENT.

YET! be thou not despondent — though
thine eyes

Have seen much on this earth—mean, or
untrue,

Life hath another side!—if thou art wise
Thou wilt not shut this coldly from thy
view!

Yes! some—nay—*many*, even,—if thou
wilt—

Have shown to thee a dark or “seamy”
side,

The paths of recklessness—the paths of
guilt,
The soul of ignominy, or of pride—

Yes! thou hast trusted and hast been de-
ceived—
Hast given love, to only meet with
spite—
Thou hast in truth and honesty believed,
In healthfulness that was but secret
blight—

But look out from the darkness—let thy
gaze
Turn from the winter to the coming
spring—
See thou the sunlight breaking on thy
ways—
See not the kite, but swallow, on the
wing!—

'Tis but the poor and feeble heart that
fails—
'Tis but the weakly eyes can not per-
ceive—
That read but earth's more melancholy
tales:
Have faith—and still in God and man
believe!

ANSWER TO THE MODERN QUESTION,

IS LIFE WORTH LIVING?

LIFE is worth living!—to the noble soul!—
Though dark clouds often o'er the blue
heavens roll—
Yet hath life many a calm and holy eve,
When only the ill-doing heart shall grieve!

And saintly deeds shall echo through the
skies—
And footsteps pass on—thoughtful, strong,
and wise—
Sweet flowers shall grow to bless the
summer air,
Tended by hands that hardly are less
fair!

Voices that tremble with a mean com-
plaint
Shall reach our ears, in many peaceful
hours—

And winds that seem to have an evil taint
Blow o'er the ripening fruits of southern
bowers—

True!—and yet men of brave and noble
worth
Shall take their places, even in these
days—
Shall walk with steadfast steps upon the
earth,
Shall do but acts that honest men shall
praise.

Yet these things—to the poor and mean of
sight—
Shall be unknown, or only passing
dreams—
They look but for the things of sin and
blight,
And Earth to them a Pandemonium
seems!

LESSONS THAT NEED BE LEARNT BY ALL.

AMONGST the churchyard tombs he,
musing, walks—
Around him, clustered, lie the many
dead—
He treads on withered flowers, with
withered stalks,
With sighing boughs of yew above his
head—

He wanders on the mighty ocean-sands,
And looks across the distant waves with
fear—
A ship goes down with all its living
“hands,”
The prayers for help meet hopelessly his
ear—

His steps are on a recent battle plain,
Here, side by side, lie comrades, friends
and foes—
In earth's unnatural conflicts cruelly
slain,—
Thus, as philosopher — he — thoughtful
goes—

He “walks the hospital”—he hears the
moans
Of anguish and the prayers for peace
and rest—

He counts the numbers of the dead men's
bones—

Then turns away—as heart-sick, as oppressed.

Lessons of life—that need be learnt by
all,

Lessons of life!—to bid us wisely, wait
And turn without dismay to death's sure
call,

Nor live—here blind and deaf until
too late!

PRAYER—FOR THE UNREADY.*

I LOOKED out on the dark and stormy
main,

And looking, thought how many, brave
of soul,
Are battling with its mighty powers in
vain,

While still the foaming billows break
and roll:

I thought how many pallid lips must part
In weary prayer by morning and by
night,

How many a loving wife and mother's
heart

Even then was shivering at the vivid
light—

The fearful glare of lightning—quivering
o'er

The billows, ever by the tempest
stirred—

While thunder rang from echoing shore to
shore—

And signal guns between the peals were
heard—

And then I prayed the heavy clouds might
lift,

Lest those —beloved at home—that hour
should die;

For Death, at sea, is stern—to act is
swift—

And giveth little time for prayer—or
sigh!

Oh! in Thy power and wisdom grant—
that time

Be given even by Thy bolts, O
Heaven!

That none this hour shall die in hardened
crime,

That none this bitter hour shall die—
unshriven!

Grant that the true and contrite heart
alone

The last, long look at earth and sea shall
cast—

And that Thy grace to sinners shall be
shown—

Even if, O God of Mercy! at the last!

THANKSGIVINGS.

I THANK Thee, O my God! for the sweet
hours

Spent on the shores of Thy most
wondrous sea—

For the sweet fragrance of Thine earthly
flowers,

For the fair song of bird from grove
—from tree.

I thank Thee for this beauty—far and
wide—

This glory—filling all broad plains of
Thine,

The oaks and elms that clothe the fair
hill-side,

The groves of peaceful and of pensive
pine—

I thank Thee that I live to love these
things,

These wonders that Thou hast created
here—

And even to hear the nightingale that sings

In Thy calm moonlight — sings and
knows no fear—

I thank Thee that I live to see the light,
The glorious sunlight of Thy boundless
skies—

And for the planets of Thy calmer night,
That shine down into mine adoring
eyes—

I thank Thee that I live to see Thy glory
Upon the ocean, even as on the land,

To feel that there can be no grander story
Than that of the creations of Thy
Hand—

* Written during a heavy thunderstorm.

That all things Thou hast fashioned are
for Man,
And that I—even—am one in Thy great
plan—
Whom Thou hast made, as from the very
sod—
For all this do I praise Thee—mighty
God!

THERE IS A KEY—

THERE is a key, untouched by many
fingers,
Whose shape is little seen by certain
eyes—
About that shape a something subtle
lingers,
That those of Love's own band alone
shall prize—

A wondrous Key is it—of purest gold—
More fine than any yet by mortals
made—
Nay—it is rather of celestial mould—
By no alloy its metal is betrayed.

That knowledge of its value Love can
give—
A glorious instinct shall be hers, alone—
Breathed into hearts of such as here shall
live,
Whom Love hath chosen for her very
own.

Something of meanest is there, in that
life
That passes Love, nor sees her steps
below—
If it hath never known of deadly strife
Yet hath it also missed her light—and
glow—

A mystery ever! for though such shall
feel
Neither Love's grief nor her soul's over-
strain—
And though they even some likeness of
her steal,
Her beauty, power, and strength—un-
known remain!

THE LESSON OF THE LEAVES.

How sadly—gently fall the withered leaves,
Their faint, soft rustle sounding through
the grove,
And to the heart of mortal that but grieves,
It is a melancholy sound to love!

Aye! there is something soothing in this
Death
Of beauty, in the closing of the year—
And in the faintness of the old year's
breath,
There almost seems as much of hope
as fear!

Nay! there is something tender in its
sound,
That telleth not of cold, nor cruel
decay—
Even while the very sadness breathes
around
There is a whisper of a brighter day!

Not bitter harshness, but a soft regret
Speaks in each flower that withers on
the tomb—
A something that seems breathing, even
yet,
Of Life's renewal—of a fairer bloom—

As if reminding us a wintry sky
Can change to one most exquisitely
fair—
Yea! as if whispering to us, as they die,
To feel no poor mistrust — and no
despair!

SO FAR AWAY!*

CHILDREN—so far away!—
Children—who dwell beneath another sky,
And for whose welfare nightly do we
pray,—
Shall we not see your faces ere we die!

Shall we not gaze,
Aye! *never* — into those strange, once
known eyes—

Shall ye cross not on earth our later
ways,
So that we greet you under our own skies?

Oh! life is a strange play!—
Those pass away from its vexed, troubled
scene

Whom we had hoped might ever with us
stay,
Leaving only their memories “ever
green!”—

Ah! how unlike our dreams!
And when the hand of fate the curtains
lift,

We see upon the bosom of Life's streams
Only dead buds that into darkness drift!

Children—so far away!—
Children! who dwell beneath another sky,
And for whose welfare nightly do we
pray—
Shall we not see your faces ere we die!

UNLESS!

UNLESS a soul acquainted be with sor-
row

He shall not be of Heaven! for grief
shall teach

Beyond all idle lessons man may borrow—
Beyond all fervid sermons man may
preach—

Trouble may often cloud a human lot,
Dark tempests over his fair household
roll,—

But yet with grief is he acquainted not,
It hath not struck his heart, nor touched
his soul.

Hardened, not softened—he his way may
take,
With angered thought and an embittered
mind—

And if the stems of his sweet roses break
He only lifts his voice to curse the wind.

And woman—who hath felt but little care
Because her sister's lot was grim and
gaunt,
Who viewed indifferently her deep despair,
And “O! be joyful,” never ceased to
chaunt—

These have no claim, in their own bitter
day,

To the hushed voices of a stormy blast—
And if they pray—they all *most* need to
pray

For peace, forgiveness—even at the last.

TO AN OLD FRIEND.

TRULY, I am not one of those—my friend,
Who thinks his eyes can pierce our
densest mists—

Who prates of how “Eternity” shall end!!
Who knoweth wherefore man on earth
exists!

I am not one of those who, even while
He grumbles sourly at Life's *shuffling*
lot,

Looks up to Heaven with boldly-impious
smile,

And judges whether God is—or is *not*!

I am not one of those who fain would
judge

All depth, all passion of the human soul,
And who declare all human life is
“fudge”—

That only vapid clouds around us roll!

I am not one of those who dare assume
All things—that are—to *know*; and even
tell

What rays divine, or *not* divine, illumine
This earth—and mock at all the tales
of Hell!

They are the wise of Earth—the *over*-
wise!

Who even pretend Futurity to know—
Who, though themselves but specks be-
neath the sky,

Can all things note above—around—
below!

CERTAIN UNHAPPY SOULS.

OH! sometimes I have stept aside—as
'twere—

To watch with eyes of grief, if not despair,
The bitterness of certain souls that dwell
On earth—aye! souls that view it as a
hell,

Of which they seek to utter curses loud
Enough to even reach the dull ears of its
crowd!

Full evil they declare the world, and yet
One plan of mending it do they forget!—
Truly so deeply occupied are they,
To mark the follies of the world's broad
way
Through all the passing hours—they leave
no time
To cleanse their own poor ways of either
fault, or crime!

Aye! somewhat proud, methinks, the devil
feels
As he stamps on their brows his well-
marked seals!
For they, of all the earth, are surely most
His own—of whom he hath the right to
boast!—
The “pure”—“self-righteous”—the “pre-
sumptuous” class,
Who scarce in angels' eyes shall for true
Christians pass!

A GLOOMY MOMENT.—I.

ALAS! the hours some pass on earthly
plains
May sadder be than by the lips is told—
The bruised soul, the o'ertaxed, fevered
brains,
The heart that grows, with disappoint-
ment, cold—

The dear ones lost—the living that are
worse
Than lost—as fruit that rotteth to the
core—
The doubts that on our path are as a
curse—
The fears that shadow us for evermore—

The looking up—almost with frenzied eye,
With broken hopes, or a rebellious will,
Into the deadly silence of the sky,
And yet to see not—hear not—know not
—still!

The planting in the earth our sweetest
flowers,
The careful shielding from the northern
blast

The ripening fruit, protected in our
bowers,
Only to see all blighted—at the last!—

Aye! these things try us more than lips
can say—
In vain for comfort and for strength we
seek—
And, though beneath God's star-lit sky we
pray,
The heart grows—sometimes—weary—
doubtful—weak!

A GLOOMY MOMENT.—II.

OH, our first faith! unquestioning and
warm,
Without one faint suspicion of a blight
In future years, or warnings of a storm,—
Or fear lest motes may even obscure our
sight—

Aye! the first faith—the generous belief
In honourable and unstained careers—
In every ear of corn in our full sheaf
Being as wholesome—sweet—as it ap-
pears—

The faith in the fair, spreading shroud of
snow
That sparkles brightly underneath our
skies,
Not dreaming that which it may hide
below
It veils as unfit for our weakly eyes—

Oh! could it last!—nor find that bitter end
So many live to wearily lament—
That of the faithless love — the lying
friend—
The grey head that with shame to earth
is bent—

Nay! speak not, and lament not, as the
fool—
But know that life is even as a school;
And he doth best that learneth in the day,
And goeth uncomplaining on his way!

YET I KNOW NOT—

YET I know not—could I have had my
choice,
I would have been without youth's fear-
less trust,

Or heard, too early, caution's saving
voice—
That warns us of corruption and of
rust!

He is a fool who lightly shall believe,
Yet in such folly there may be small
sin;

He is the criminal who shall deceive,
And wear a white fleece o'er a wolfine
skin—

And I would rather trust, as I have done,
Than walk a path of poor, suspicious
fear—

Though a mistaken race I may have run,
Such is no ignominious career—

Mine was the *error*—not the *sin*—and I,
If I walk on with somewhat saddened
feet,

At least walk not beneath a treacherous
sky,

The air may even be chill, yet pure and
sweet—

Life's lessons may be harsh and yet well-
learnt—

So they be learnt ere life's *departing*
hours—

And if some deeply on the brow are
burnt,

Others have come with crowns of tender
flowers!

GOD OF THE UNIVERSE.

GOD of the universe—Thou whose great
name

Rings forth o'er the world that Thou
hast made—

Thy creatures still are those of sin and
shame,

Thy worship is refused—Thy faith be-
trayed—

When shall men feel Thee infinite?—nor
pray

To Thee but in the times of cloud and
grief?

Forgetting Thee through Spring's fair,
budding day,

And the sure fate awaiting each new
leaf!

Some of the world are yet more vile than
when,

In earlier ages, Thou wast little known;
Many are there of unbelieving men,

Of sceptics who at faith will mock, or
groan!

They speak as fools who thus their souls
declare—

As those who understand not what they
speak—

As those whose eyes discern not earth's
most fair—

As those that of the devil love to
shriek!

Oh! would'st Thou, with Thy mighty voice
of thunder,

But silence these and fill the earth with
wonder—

So that shall all confess Thy power sub-
lime!—

But Thy time, mighty Heaven!—is not
our time!

HUMANITY'S COMPLAINT OF LIFE.

THOU grantest us for joy but little time,
Men say, O Life! throughout thy varied
years—

Too often dost thou brand our brows with
crime—

Make dim the eyes with ever-falling
tears—

And there are periods when fogs veil thy
land,

Whose heavy curtain tardily uplifts—

And thou dost blight thy flowers with
thine own hand,

Discrediting the freshness of thy gifts.

Too oft dost thou oppress us, from the
first,

With such unconscionable weight of woe
That man the years that thou hast given

hath cursed,
And cried the march of death was but
too slow!

O Life!—and yet for thee what deeds are
done!

And of the crowds that in thy vales are
born,

What evil races do thy creatures run—
Till even thyself hath turned from them
with scorn!—

Or left them but a remnant of thy power—
Or killed their every joy, but not their
longing—

And made them even loathe and curse
each hour
Of thine — each path with the like
mourners thronging.

Yes! thou dost grant for joy but little
time

O Life! throughout thy many varied
years—
Too often dost thou brand our brow with
crime—

Make dim our eyes with ever-falling
tears!

TO —.

YES, love!—my heart is calm—though I
may sigh

O'er lessons life impresses—yet I know
No dark and dull depression—no, not I!
Even if to learn my lesson I seemed
slow!

But now, love, it is learnt, and learnt
right well—

I shall “not kick against the pricks”
again!

Or hear, beforehand, my funeral bell,
With bitter sentiments of loss and pain!

So much of joy have I—I have no right
To more—and I with grateful thoughts
could die

Even should death seek his prey this very
night—

With the last clouding of the midnight
sky!

But yet this is not *all*—to thee I owe
That wheels of life so lightly, softly
move—

And nothing that my soul can do, I know,
Is half that yet it owes thee, O my love!

But yet for others have I often grieved—
For those whose hearts seem full of hate
and blight—

And had I not in the All Good believed,
Dark oft would be the Watches of the
Night!

OLD TYPES OF GOOD AND VILE.

FOR still old types of good and vile re-
peat—

Though some mean souls may love to
hurt or blight,

These shall not make the rose of old less
sweet,

Nor change to black the lily's spotless
white!

They shall not change the nightingale to
raven—

Croaking to them from some old, blasted
tree;

Nor of a noble spirit make a craven—

Nor a true Christian make a Pharisee!

Aye!—still *this* type is, as in earlier days,
Boastful that theirs, alone, are pious
ways;

Yet—though they wear not the same robes
of old,

Men note their minds are of the same vile
mould!—

Neither can'st thou the Cynic change—
nor fool:

The first believes no joy to him unknown,
The last will neither learn from ancient
school

Nor modern — nor his ignorance will
own!

And still shall Love repeat her tender
strains,

Under the stars of modern woods and
plains;

And still the roses flourish round our
paths—

And still sits Faith beside our household
hearths!

LIFE'S ROMANCE.

THOU hast been as a long romance, O
Life!

Although thy secrets I shall never tell—

Full of much bitterness and fiery strife,
Full of the throes of deepest love as well.

If I have been into the depths of Hell,
So have I also soared to Paradise—
If I have known the ocean's northern swell
So have I known the glow of southern skies.

If I the voice of bitter hate have heard,
And strolled through grasses by the vipers stirred,
So have I passed through a rose-covered gate,
What time the moon was early—sunlight late.

If I have trodden on a hornet's nest,
And rested in the shade of poisoned bowers,
So have I worn a posy in my breast,
Full of the sweetest and most tender flowers.

And I have also sailed o'er tranquil seas—
And slept beneath the sheltering wing of Love—
And I have lain beneath green forest trees,
And dreamt the dreams that waft the soul above!

IN THE SAD HOURS—

IN the sad hours of shadow and of grief
The hand is *his* that ever brings relief,
Lessens our pain—our drooping spirit cheers,

Helps us to hope and dissipates our fears;

That life for others' welfare hath been spent—

That strength for others' benefit been lent;

For others would he justice ever claim,
Nor robbed he any of a well-earned fame.

And kindness marked ever his shrewd gaze,

He loved to note the wisdom of earth's ways,

Not to deprive life of its tender graces,
Nor count with scorn the faults of human races—

Not one of those is he, who only preach
Of leprosies that sometimes round us spread—

Of envious fingers that will never reach
To place a crown upon a victor's head!—

No! but in hours of shadow and of grief
The hand is *his* that ever brings relief,
Lessens our pain—our drooping spirit cheers,

Helps us to hope—and dissipates our fears!

LIVING TO HELP.

To —.

LIVING to help, to soothe Earth's grief
and pain,

Thy soul on deeds of mercy ever bent,
Tender of heart, as cool and calm of brain,

By heaven thou hast to us been surely sent.

Although men's faults thou seest with keen eyes,

No charitable deed dost thou regret—
A benefactor, and not *coldly* wise,
Yet learning much from lessons *most* forget—

Living for God, through all thy years of life,

Doing whate'er thy right hand findeth here

To do—yet joining in no *vulgar* strife,
Through love of holy peace—and not from fear.

Warm in the love of all of earth's fair things,

Even of the smallest blossom of wild flowers—

The dove that coos, the nightingale that sings

Amongst the roses trailing o'er thy bowers—

So hast thou ever been—so art thou now!
So—until from this earth thou may'st depart—

The light from Heaven is shining on thy brow—

The love of Heaven is glowing in thy heart!

DAYS OF OLD—

So, seated on the tree-surrounded lawn,
I think again upon the days of old,
When—though in maidenhood's yet early
dawn—

Love's ever thrilling tale to me was told.

Love that was—that is—ever shall be—
true!

That not one smile, one sigh could ever
feign—

A tale for ever old—yet ever new—

Nor on this earth one we repeat in
vain!

Then I recall the faithful friend — the
friends—

That kept their trust unto the hour of
death;

The brother's love—unswerving—such as
ends

Only, at last — with life's departing
breath;

Then memory shall remind of evil hearts—
Of lips that I have known—that spoke
but lies—

Of seeming friends—that played such bitter
parts—

The wolf, of old, in the meek lamb's
disguise—

Aye! I have known *both classes*—there-
fore I

Feel my soul full of gratitude, at last,
That if o'er "false friends" I once
breathed a sigh

That very sigh is now *one of the past!*

EXCEPT FOR LOVE!—

EXCEPT for Love, O God! the world were
sad,

Even from the first break of the troubled
dawn

Of Life,—except for Love I had been
clad

In sackcloth — *certainly* not in fine-spun
lawn!

Except for Love, one little vessel—frail
And slightly made, sent forth upon the
waves,
Deprived of all to help it—rudder!—sail!
Had gone down—down into a world of
graves!

Except for Love had my rejoicing feet
Been never where earth's fairer gifts
abound—

Where roses, overhead, hung fresh and
sweet,
And ripened fruits blushed o'er the
ground.

Except for Love I had not, rapt in thought,
Walked under the calm skies of sum-
mer's night,

And, as I mused, the distant echoes caught
Of worlds that lie beyond our longing
sight.

Except for Love I know I should not give
For Life on earth one longing, anxious
sigh—

Except for Love I had not cared to live,
Except for Love I had been glad to
die!

FOR GOD IS LOVE.

FOR God is love—and though imperfect
here

The path of love by every mortal taken,
One leading ever to that glorious sphere
Wherein no word of grief shall echoes
waken—

So is this faith sent to our life on earth
That hearts shall not be crushed by the
fierce rages

Of passing tempests, that through all its
girth

And breadth have troubled earth for
countless ages.

Aye! that we may be stronger for the
hands

That clasp our own, in darkness or in
light,

Or when the deluge sweeps our fairest
lands,

Or northern winds our choicest blossoms
blight.

Thus love from heaven descended — to
 abide
 With man and build for him her fairest
 bowers,
 To walk in happy sunlight by his side,
 Or comfort him in melancholy hours.

But there are those whom love will yet
 pass by!—
 She hath no kinship with the selfish
 soul—
 Who takes his way beneath the world's
 grey sky,
 And, unlamented, pays death's bitter
 toll!

A FAITHFUL ADHERENT!

LOVE! there is still a small, but glorious
 band,
 Upon this earth of latter days of
 thine—
 Of those who wander o'er thy sunlit
 land—
 Of those who kneel and worship at thy
 shrine:

Still he, who in thy tender arms re-
 poses,
 Will rise to crown thy brow with choicest
 roses—
 Will lave thy feet with fresh and sparkling
 waters,
 Will sing thee songs of all thine own fair
 daughters.

'Tis true that thou hast sometimes spread
 thy wings
 If there be evil tempests in the sky—
 And death claims of thee many tender
 things,
 And treachery hath often made thee
 sigh—

Yet will we guard all that thou hast of
 sweet,
 The while the tender blossoms last,—
 nor tread
 Upon one flower of thine with scornful
 feet,
 Although, alas! it withered be — or
 dead!—

He doth the best who plays a grateful
 part,
 Who leads thee to his brightest, fairest
 bowers,
 Who to thy keeping gives his very heart,
 And bids thee guard it through Earth's
 darkest hours!

TO —.

YES!—thou one of earth's faithful spirits
 wert—
 Who cheer life's pathways as with
 Heaven's own smile—
 Who could do nothing to another's hurt,
 Who shunned all footsteps of the mean
 and vile.

The "others" fled—Ha! and with jeers
 they fled,
 When northern winds upon the plains
 were cold,
 When dreary storms broke heavily o'er-
 head,
 And days of grief in numbers were
 untold—

Full hastily they went—yet they turned
 back
 Missiles to fling at one sad home and
 hearth—
 And gathering all the mud of their own
 track,
 They cast it at a well-known envied
 path!—

They showed the coward's feather, and
 then lied,
 So easily it seemed, as though they felt
 Not even one conscience-prick,—nor knew
 the pride
 With which in war an *honest* blow is
 dealt.

In *secret* do such stab—when skies are
 bright—
 When wings of peace seem spread above
 thy days;
 But *open* insults, blows and words of
 spite
 In *troubled* times will be their chosen
 ways.

PLEASANT REFLECTIONS.

YET gentle, faithful spirits dwell below,
That to condemn will ever be but slow—
Eyes that look not on life with foolish
blindness,

And yet are eyes that beam with loving
kindness.

They see not—*only*—feet that go astray!—
But feet that take a clean and noble way;
They do not think that they should judge
as God—

Nor o'er all sinners stretch their *baby*
rod!—

They are not always pointing out the
crimes
That darken often, still, our earthly
times—

The withered blossom and the blighted
grain—

The sheep that die of murrain on the
plain;

They point not simply out, men's steps
of weakness—

And pass o'er those of honour, love and
meekness;

Full of the charity that is Divine,
The grace of Heaven in eyes of these shall
shine!—

These are earth's nobler spirits—where
they tread—

Even though in deserts—flowers around
them spread!—

Their eyes are full of light; where'er they
go

A smile will Heaven upon their paths
bestow.

A PEEVISH QUESTION.

HE came from Hell and yet by Heaven
was sent—

To teach to us long-suffering, patience,
meekness;

That grief is here ruled for man's punish-
ment,

For strengthening feebleness—uprooting
weakness;

He came to see how evil souls entice
The young, the weak, to folly, or to vice;
To see the harsh and simple *force* of
brutes

Take reason's place in settling man's
disputes!—

He came into the paths of life to meet
The rash, the frivolous, the tottering feet
Treading the gloomy path that endeth
where

Are heard no sounds save those of fierce
despair—

He came to sometimes note the pure of
heart—

Those, even, formed to fill a nobler part,
Walk cheerily beneath malicious skies,
With thoughtless songs of joy and blinded
eyes.

How long shall earth be—what it is—we
ask!

How long remain a hard, unfinished task
To teach the foolish souls of men below
The way Heaven pointed out—*so long*
ago!

COUNSELS FOR —.

POOR is the path that human steps shall
tread

Concerning which no falsehoods will be
said!—

Poor souls are theirs who shrink from open
light,

Nor dare, unveiled, to face a bitter sky,
Lest any seek to cast on them a blight,
Lest any seek to tell of them a lie!

Thou shalt not escape calumny—if thou
Hast than thy fellows a more lofty brow,
Or if thou hast a soul so free from fear
That thou wilt even rebuke the worst
career—

Point out the blunders staining folly's
path,

The liar—sitting by a true man's hearth!

Aye! and with all its sins the “wicked
world,”

Concerning whose unthoughtful, reckless
ways

Thy lip so often mockingly hath curled,
 Hath done more works that Heaven and
 man may praise
 Than all that may self-righteous ways
 adorn,
 Despite their vanity and foolish scorn!

LIFE'S LIGHT AND DARK PAGES!

"Where there is much light there will also be
 much shadow."—BECKERATH.

NATURE abhors a vacuum — 'tis well
 known—

So genius a dull atmosphere detests—
 And "where there is much light" is also
 thrown

The denser shadow from the mountain
 crests,

And there are things of mean and feeble
 state

No rays sent even from Heaven shall
 penetrate.

And the *dull* soul will loathe the brighter
 brain,

Despite the oily comforts of conceit!
 For competition is to him a strain,—

He feels ere long, the weakness of his
 feet—

Then hides his face in sharply felt dis-
 grace,

And needs must fall out of the coming
 race.

So, as the moon shines brightly on the
 deep

More heavily the island-shadows sleep—
 Darker the battlements on earthly
 towers:

Ah!—so in life! the fairer are its hours,
 The richer for a while our flowers shall
 bloom—

So sadder are the shadows of the tomb.

EVEN WISDOM IS NOT ALL!

NESTOR is wise—yet wisdom is not *all*—
 For something more shall kindly Nature
 call—

Something beyond the shrewd and
 thoughtful mind—

The heart that men shall feel is true and
 kind!

Nor yet is beauty all—the head is bent
 To catch the glowing rose's fragrant scent.

Wisdom by little human grief is stirred—
 Not always—even by *her* sharpened ear,
 The echo of our agony is heard—

The tone of anguish — penitence, or
 fear;

Not *always* of her children justified—
 Though, through her counsels, men have
 fought and died.

Men look on thee to worship—and yet
 thou

Hast something in which men shall find
 thee wanting—

Thou hast, O Wisdom! the calm, steady
 brow,

But lack the heart for others' sorrows
 panting—

Ah!—still thou needest *something*—that
 shall move—

The angel's praises—and that need is—
 LOVE!

EARTHLY LIFE.

THOU art an eagle — can'st thou then
 escape

The meanest foes besetting mountain
 ways?

Noblest of all thy kind in strength and
 shape,

And yet the common flea upon thee
 preys!

Thou art a lion—if not slain by man,
 Or by some angry foe of thine own
 kind,

Is't not the ass's mean, ungenerous plan
 To kick at thee, when thou art deaf, or
 blind?

Thou art a whale, yet shall a harpoon
 kill,

And by a mean wound shorten thy
 strong life?—

For by no effort of the mightiest will
 Shalt thou avoid a poor, ignoble strife.

Thou art a man, and yet may not avoid
 Blows dealt thee by the very vilest
 hand,

Thou hast been and again shalt be
destroyed
By one whom thou hast scorned upon
the land.

Thou art a woman—yet may live to feel
A woman's hand a devil's blow can
strike—

Although that hand a sister's wound can
heal—

Alas! men know her—angel—fiend—
alike!

Aye! earthly life is this—and earthly ways
Are these — and yet but feeble souls
complain.

Rebuke the evil and the noble praise—
So shall thy mortal hours prove not in
vain!

A QUIET FACE.

THEY look into that quiet face,
That face some think they read so well—
The brow is calm and full of grace,
Yet what its secrets, who can tell?

Inscrutable and dark those eyes,
And steadily thine own can meet,
Nor speaketh she in tones that rise,
Or sink—they are but low and sweet—

Yet lips that even are big with fate
May stoop to flatter—to beguile—
And many a storm hath lain in wait
Behind a seeming-tranquil smile.

Think not that thou can'st lightly read
The secrets of a quiet breast,
For, moodily, the heart can bleed,
Or break, behind that air of rest—

And there are those that cannot weep—
Whose thoughts, whose saddest thoughts
lie low—
Still waters—know'st thou not—run deep,
Not even the wise their currents know!

LOVE—SWEET LOVE—

O LOVE—sweet love! in countless un-
known graves
Hast thou been buried Here where
roses bloom,

And where the melancholy willows wave
Their weeping branches o'er thy quiet
tomb;

And here, where skies have lost their
clearer blue,
Aye! in our City churchyards dost thou
sleep,

Calm as among old walls—where but so
few

Of hurrying souls that pass thee stay
to weep—

Not rarely rested thou—in sadder times—
In many a lonely and untended spot,
In hateful crowds, encompassed by the
crimes

And follies of poor souls who knew thee
not.

Ah! in all countries art thou buried—
Love!

Here in the sweetest and sky-covered
lands—

Here with cathedral towers to rise above
The sepulchre adorned by reverent
hands.

Yet there may be one glorious realm on
high

Where all thy children, Love! shall be
at last

Under Heaven's restful and unchanging
sky,

The time of mortal trials and suffering
past!

GOD GIVETH HIS BELOVED REST.

HE who but walks in calm, untroubled
ways,

Knows nought, or little, save of *outer*
strife—

He who hath only still and summer days
Misses the deeper lessons of this life.

God giveth His beloved rest—but rest
May often come not ere the setting sun
Shines in rose colour, on the mountain
crest,

When the rough, toiling steps of day
are done!

God giveth His beloved rest! — but
 peace,
 That keeps the soul from fainting—from
 despair,
 Cometh not oft till night, when winds shall
 cease,
 And the fierce sounds of war have left
 the air.

God giveth His beloved rest—but they
 Who fain would feel the summer's
 tender glow
 Must first to winter's monarch fall a prey,
 And learn the bitterness of winter's
 snow!

God giveth His beloved rest—but these
 Shall first have known Earth's battle-
 ground of woes—
 Fought with the deadly calm—the stormy
 breeze,
 Ere they have earned the sweetness of
 repose.

IF THOU HAST KEPT—

YES! one may dream that we through
 life may move
 With thoughtful footsteps — and with
 circumspection,
 Yes! one may dream true love shall meet
 true love,
 Or warm affection win back warm
 affection—

That if we show our hearts are faithful
 hearts,
 And that our path hath been the one
 true path—
 That if we steer our ships by well-proved
 charts—
 That if we glowing keep our household
 hearth—

Then shall we reap our due reward—to
 find
 Despite Earth's many troubled —
 darkened skies,
 The honest trust, and the straightforward
 mind,
 Lips ever true, if, sometimes, lips un-
 wise!—

Dreams—yet but dreams—the dream that
 faith shall win
 Faith in return—that honour honour
 claims—
 That holy steps erase the steps of sin—
 That word of honesty bold falsehood
 shames!

If thou hast kept through life thy love's
 fond trust—
 Thy one or two warm and unswerving
 friends—
 Go down with gratitude into the dust,
 And own thy life at last in sunlight
 ends!

MUSING—

THOUGH Life displays its "sere and yel-
 low leaf"
 Much also may it have of autumn's
 glow—
 Much of the calmness of departing grief,
 When voices of Earth's raging storms
 fall low—

And even with the sinking of the blast,
 What time the gathering clouds obscure
 the sky,
 Thou can'st hear yet the voices of the
 past,
 Each as a low and melancholy sigh.

Tears! tears! they fall now rarely, and
 the eyes
 Have more, far more of trust in their
 meek gaze—
 The soul, less passionate, is yet more wise,
 Her steps, if weak, go gently through
 their days.

O grey-haired Time! if thou can'st garner
 not
 The golden grains of Wisdom life
 can sow
 Upon each pathway of our human lot,
 Thy final scenes may be but scenes of
 woe!

Ah! sad it is if on each later field
 Of Life spring only plants of evil blight,
 Nor longer tender flowers of memory yield
 Under the shadows of a starless night!

EARTH'S MEANER SOULS.

GOD! they who grumble at this life forget
 Our world is only as a stepping-stone
 Unto a loftier one, one that is set
 Near unto Thee—a fair realm all Thine
 own!

Forgetting but too often what few years
 Are lent us here, to fit us for the life
 Promised to those who shun "the world's"
 careers,
 Nor shall embroil themselves in evil
 strife—

Forgetting that but little time is granted
 To make their own paths wholesome,
 sweet and true,
 They have but for this earth's poor praises
 panted,
 Not for the sweeter worlds beyond *their*
 view!

And—bent on standing forth as preacher
 —loud
 About the sinful races *others* run,
 In pointing out the vices of the crowd,
 The foul things breeding underneath the
 sun—

They still neglect the filth that gathers
 slowly
 Around them, and with insolence most
 cool
 They point out that *their* lives—alone—
 are holy,
 That each one—of "the rest"—is knave,
 or fool!

WANDERING—"IN THE
 CALM"—

AYE! and the drollest tales are some-
 times spread
 Concerning *some!*—who, while they fear
 the light
 And tremble lest on *them* it should be
 shed,
 Yet dread still more the solemn shades
 of night!

One walks beneath the starlit sky un-
 veiled,
 With face uplifted, with uncovered
 head,
 Mocked at by those who all their lives
 have failed
 To see the light upon a poet shed.

To a true poet will the whole world
 hearken—
 It is no voice by mortals often heard—
 And though the shadows may around him
 darken,
 Still shall his sweet, triumphant voice
 be heard!

Only the dusky bat flits softly by,
 While rose-leaves lightly fall upon the
 grass—
 Only at times is heard the owl's weird
 cry,
 As overhead the ghostly bird may pass:

The air is still, the air is full of balm,
 The stars, unclouded, look into rapt
 eyes—
 And on the poet wanders — "in the
 calm"
 Reading Earth's secrets under her calm
 skies!

NUMBERS GO DOWN!—

NUMBERS go down upon the plains of
 life,
 Demoralised, or slain—in petty strife—
 Or stricken by some covert, fatal blows,
 Dealt by the shrewd hands of unworthy
 foes—
 So! numbers go down!

Oh! there are many met, devoid of fear,
 Launched on some new, or perilous career,
 Who may not all its deadly dangers
 weigh,
 And—knowing not—go hopelessly astray—
 So! numbers go down!

And there are those of untried brain and
 heart—
 Who fain would play on earth some noble
 part,

Who, dreaming not of foes, on every
side,
Have onward marched with a too reckless
pride—
So! numbers go down!

And there are those too feeble for their
work,
Who need that they life's nobler labours
shirk,
And who, impelled by circumstances, still
Take useless steps to gain the lofty hill—
So! numbers go down!

Numbers go down—and there are those
that blame
"Those others" for their own mistake
and shame—
And who will fiercely swear that it is they
Whose envious efforts turned them from
their way!
So!—*numbers go down!*

TO —.

LITTLE of mankind hast thou understood
If much for envy thou hast not allowed—
Aye! think not even though thy cause is
good
Thou may'st speak, unmolested, to the
crowd!

Think not, as you defend good women,
those
Of bitter hearts will join you in the
fight!—
Far sooner will they seek to join thy foes
And stab thee—so they shall be veiled
from sight!

Think not because thou know'st of brave
and strong
And noble men, upon this earth of ours,
That others would not seek to do thee
wrong,
And use against thee all their meanest
powers!

Think not if thou hast genius, that the
mean
Will not assail thee — pelt thee with
abuse,

Nor sow their lies where'er thy steps have
been,
And every credit to thy works refuse!

Care not! it is on earth the constant plan
Of righteousness to be assailed by
wrong—
Even as the thief abhors the honest man—
And weakness scowls with envy at the
strong.

AH! NEVER AGAIN!

CAN'ST thou, who hast crushed down a
tender flower
Its happy place upon this earth restore,
See it rebloom in yet a later hour,
The joy of all who loved its grace
before?
Ah!—*never again!*

Can'st thou who once hath turned a
stream aside
From banks whereon did flowers of
freedom grow,
And left its former bed choked up and
dried,
Bid it again in the same channels flow?
Ah!—*never again!*

Can'st thou who hast a fair young faith
betrayed,
And left it wandering in some untried
track,
Bring it with ease, out of the sombre
shade—
Its early, happy ways of old bring
back?
Ah!—*never again!*

Can'st thou, with full faith, in life's early
day,
In honest men, in honourable deeds,
Tread with unshaken faith a *later* way,
Nor know the faith that fails—the
heart that bleeds?
Ah!—*never again!*

That hope is futile; yet would'st thou
deny
That men can nobly live—as nobly die—
And all things low and mean in life can
scorn—
It had been better thou wert never born!

BEAUTIFUL THOU WERT—IF!

AYE! beautiful thou wert—O earth!—if
 we
 Could only from thy bitter souls be free,
 From those that do revile thee and abuse
 thee—
 From those that so “despitefully” do use
 thee!

If they would but employ such strength as
 thou
 Hast given them!—and smoothing the
 knit brow
 Keep leisure hours to lave—not stainless
 feet!—
 And henceforth walk in pathways that are
 sweet!—

For life is stern and gives not *too* much
 time
 To holier make our troubled stay below,
 To watch o’er weakness and to stamp out
 crime,
 To see our flowers and fruits protected
 grow—

Therefore, ye grumblers, see that each
 spends well
 The hours permitted us beneath the sun,
 Or men may ring the solemn funeral
 bell
 Ere each *but* evil in his time hath done!

“Gird up thy loins,” as once men used
 to say!
 Find out for thine own steps a sweeter
 way
 See thine own deeds and words may win
 thee grace—
 So shall earth grow in time a—Better
 Place!!

JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE.

BLIND AND BLIND.

THEY who, O Justice! choose to draw thee
 blind,
 Should know that in thy path a follower
 treads—
 One who oft lags but paces few behind,
 Twisting and plaiting many evil
 threads.

Thou art but blind in that thou would’st
 be fair,
 O Justice!—in all things of small, or
 great—
 Thou would’st to all things give but its
 due share,
 And balance all things by an honest
 weight.

Thy sister’s blindness is that partial one
 That seeth still the evil things desired!
 She passeth o’er what brave works love
 hath done,
 To see those hate and malice may have
 fired!

She looks not out for beauty—but the
 spotted
 And stained attract her of each summer
 peach—
 And to our pilgrims, here, hath she
 allotted
 Some evil path to tread, to all and each.

Injustice—*often*—is less blind than vile—
 She sees but things that she would mark
 with shame—
 And with her mean eyes and her vicious
 smile,
 May well close kinship with one Satan
 claim!

NO! I REPINE NOT, HERE—

No! I repine not, here—surely not I!
 Have I not cause for gratitude—so deep
 It might be only uttered in a sigh,
 Being akin to joys that make one weep?

And that mine anguish here hath been
 intense—
 The grief of earth—yet sent us from
 above—
 Hath made me not forget the Hand, from
 whence
 Thy joys again were sent to me—O
 Love!

And for that gift of Love—Love, that
 hath come
 To thrill my heart with Poetry’s sweet
 song,

Whose glorious voice is as a voice but dumb,
Or weak—to those who seek to do her wrong—

Yes! through that gift of Love—if it brings pain,
If it brings anguish—aye! and burning tears,
If it brings countless sufferings in its train—
Would I be grateful still for earthly years!

Love! Love! a joy so exquisite that I
Look upward into God's mysterious Dome,
And dream of stars in the blue, boundless sky,
As Love—Love and its worshipper's—fair home!

IT MAY BE!

AYE! it may be that poets do but well
From uncongenial souls apart, to dwell,
If—*ere they rest*—from strife and noise afar,
They have learnt much of conflict, and of war.

Think not a poet *only* learns from *dreams*!
Although too lightly, haply, doth he trust,
And gives his faith to that which only *seems*,
That crumbles at his gentle touch to dust!

But if from Sorrow Fancy often brings
Her lays, and many tales of tears hath told,
Yet often she of love and glory sings—
And of fair shores but poet-eyes behold!

Alas! will many on fair jewels gaze,
Nor ever learn their beauty, or their prices—
And others live in darkness all their days
Or occupied in counting up Earth's vices!

A poet lifts to Heaven his thoughtful eyes,
Eyes full of meditation and—of love;
And in sweet self-communion shall arise
His soul unto the fairer realms above!

OLD TYPES.

THE World repeats itself—still in these times
As in more ancient days we meet each type
Of old—of faults, of follies and of crimes—
The faithless friend, for treachery ever ripe;

The man who fell from you in gloomy days,
To treat you with derision and with scorn—
Who yet creeps back into the coward's ways,
When, after tempests, breaks a peaceful morn;

The evil soul who thinks all men are vile,
That honesty is as a thing unknown;
The Pharisee who cries all hands defile
To clasp—to even touch—*except his own*;

The *ignorant* woman, full of mean delight,
Though she hath but achieved the *poorest* fame!
Whose heart, meanwhile, is even devoured
by spite,
For one who hath a loftier, nobler name;

Aye! and the *goody* soul who boasts so loudly—
(Or gets a friend to do it) his good deeds;
Lastly!—the soul that bears itself *not* proudly,
But nobly for the good of others bleeds!

TAKE COMFORT!

VERY weary seemest thou—sad heart!
Take comfort!—darkness but precedes the light—
The heavy gloom of sorrow may depart,
And dawn shall break—if slowly—after night!

The years repeat themselves—the sins of old

Are still recurrent in these later times—
And meanness flourishes and vice is bold,
And modern paths are stained by
ancient crimes;

The storms of earth come up—the storms
blow o'er,

And man the same old battles fights
again—

He hath the like wild heart and fretful
brain,

And follows paths that yet misled before;

The weak, the proud and the conceited,
seem

As crowds that intercept Heaven's fairer
rays,

But Life is yet beyond a mystic dream—

A world of many strong and noble
ways!—

Therefore—be not too sad—for peace shall
come

If it shall not be here—and far above
The conflicts of Earth's brief, uncertain
home—

But! in the realm of peace—of light—
of love.

LOVE IS GREATER!

HATE, envy, malice—each will have its
day—

And deal you many a secret, dastard
blow;

But Love shall sweep them from her
stronger way,

And bring back to thy life her heaven-
lent glow.

Therefore, faint not! though darkness
veils thy land,

Though evil voices echo in thy bowers,
And though the vile feet of a thieving
band

Are found amongst the tenderest of thy
flowers.

Love—Love—true Love!—is greater far
than they,—

And if she guards thee, both by noon
and night,

Thine enemies shall make thee not their
prey,

Nor ever conquer thee in dastard fight.

If thou art "one of hers" she will not
leave thee

Because the air is full of sounds of
strife;

Let not the bitter-hearted, therefore,
grieve thee,

Or even bring one cloud upon thy life.

Love—Love for ever faithful, near thee
stands,—

And she shall shield thee from each
stinging blast—

Her sweet eyes brightening even winter
lands,

Her singing cheering life unto the last.

MUSING.

EARTH teacheth her stern lessons unto
all:

On fields of flowers the blighting shadows
fall—

Weeds grow up rankly on our fairer
ways—

We blindly choose the path that but
betrays,

That leads into unwholesome swamps,
and there

Hear the grim echoes of this world's
despair.

Lessons of Life—shadows of sin and
blight—

Lessons that some rebel against, as
though

Paths of security were theirs by right,
And an inheritance *but* theirs — be-
low!

As though fair fruits of ripeness, flowers
of bloom,

Did others rob us of, for days of gloom.

Lessons of Life—they teach us what foul
lies

The lips, forsworn of envy — spread
abroad;

They bid us to beware of treacherous eyes,
Of words and deeds that never shall
accord;

Of the mean Pharisees of earth, who
 crave
 Self-exaltation—and defame the brave.

Lessons of Life—how fair a view they
 give,
 Not rarely, of the world that spreads
 beneath

The stars—of those who noble years can
 live,

Whose trust in Heaven is faithful unto
 death,

Whose constancy, through all earth's
 darker days

Shall fill the heart with gratitude—with
 praise!

AGE, WISDOM BRINGS BUT TO HER CHOSEN FEW!—

AGE, wisdom brings but to her chosen
 few!

Experience is useless in some eyes—
 Strange scenes may pass—re-pass before
 men's view,

Yet comprehended only—solely—by the
wise!

And one has seen men, women too, we
 fear,

Nearing the very end of their career,
 Yet no more Wisdom in their brains hath
thickened

Than had in Yorick's skull, that Hamlet's
 stomach sickened!—

And—"smells so—Pah!" and even thus,
 we know,

Smell some of the "wise counsels"—
 that proceed

From certain lips—that oily may flow,
 Yet whose vain stream shall never
 nourish wholesome seed!

That there are souls conceited beyond all
 That lips can tell us, wise men can't
 deny,

Who boast they spirits from the deep can
 call,

And who will e'en pretend they hear the
 answering cry!

Age brings us wisdom—may she bring it
 me!—

Aye! ye may call her yet she may not
 come—

Yes!—one may call for spirits from the
 sea—

Alas! the ever dreary practices of
 some!

COULD'ST THOU SOME BITTER SOULS BUT TOUCH!—

LOVE! Love! could'st thou some bitter
 souls but touch,

This world would be a brighter world—
 and much

Of dust and refuse would be swept away,
 Uncovering earth's rich soil to sweeter
 day.

Have some *no* power, O Love! to *even*
 believe

In thy sweet works, done even in *their*
 time—

Can they of thy fair lessons *none*
 receive—

Lessons that are as tender as sublime?

O noble Love!—the heart that knows thee
 not

Is as a fruit squeezed by the hand of
 sin,

Then thrown indifferently aside, to rot,
 Or to present but the hard, *dried-up*
 skin!

For one of earth's most profitless, most
 sour,

Is he—whom nature looks on with a
 sigh,

Born in some luckless, some unhappy
 hour

Under a bitter, or inclement sky!

Aye! even as one speechless—brainless—
 blind—

A "waste production" of the human
 kind!

Whom nature hath, despite her power and
 skill,

Finding uncomely, left uncomely still!

I HEAR THE THRUSHES SINGING IN THE GROVE—

I HEAR the thrushes singing in the
grove,
Singing of spring, of happiness, of love,
I hear the bees that seek the fragrant
rose,
Humming, as the fair leaves above them
close;

I hear the boatman busy with his oar,
Pushing his light boat from the shingly
shore,
Then from a distance his gay voice comes
back,
To join with others on an inland track;

I hear the murmur of a lover's voice,
That seems in all things kindred, to re-
joice,
Confessing the deep happiness that yet
By gentle souls may on this earth be met;
Ah!—and still!—Hearest thou that solemn
knell,
Knowest thou not the lesson it would
tell—
That lesson full of sorrow, full of pain
That warns us against Death Love wars
in vain!—

Yonder a grave is dug—alas! a grave
Death makes for even our fairest, or
most brave!—
None shall *his* lance escape. Go! be thou
wise:
On Heaven, not Earth, O mortal! fix
thine eyes!

OH! TO LOOK BACK—

BUT, oh! to look back with a heavy sigh,
And hear the dreary memories that
awaken!—
Ah God!—to look back on the years gone
by,
On the misleading paths our feet have
taken!—
The mists have from the landscape rolled
away—
The hideous pitfalls meet our startled
eye—

The ghastly pitfalls that in shadow lay,
Their depths now measured, under sun-
set's sky!—

O God! to look back and to see how near
Our steps had been to these—*one* step
beyond,
And all had then been lost that makes
life dear—
Aye! broken every sweet and tender
bond!

Aye! trampled down earth's even fairest
flowers,
And passed all loved things into evil
dust;
Neglected, all the fruits of autumn bowers,
Or left but to the robber's burning lust.

O God!—to look back and to wring the
hands,
Or clasp them on a brow but seamed
with care—
As twilight shadows deepen on our lands,
And night draws the dark curtain of
despair!

FOOLS AND THEIR FOLLY.

A TREASURE ship was theirs, and one
they wrecked!
The ship of faith, that shall not sail
again—
Warnings they treated with a strange
neglect—
Experience spoke—but spoke to them
in vain.

Now we have read the riddle, let us hear
Its name no more—let it forgotten rest—
The skies are placid now and calmly
clear,
The sun nears, slowly, to the silent
West!

Let evil memories vanish as foul mists—
Past shadows ward off with repellent
hands—
The evening wind, that “bloweth where
it lists,”
Shall drive them off from the sweet,
silent lands.

Recall we sunny hours and fair, blue
 skies—
 On which most gratefully our eyes shall
 rest—
 Turn we to them our sad, but calmer
 eyes,
 Light gloweth still on many a far hill-
 crest.

Look not down into depths that make thee
 weep—
 Remember Love hath been both warm
 and true—
 Thank God for this, and let black
 shadows sleep,
 And look, henceforth, upon a sweeter
 view!

ALAS FOR HOURS OF OVER- WHELMING GRIEF!

ALAS! for hours of overwhelming grief—
 When to the very dust our head is
 bowed,
 When we remember joy as but too brief,
 When sorrow is heartbreaking, though
 not loud—

'Tis then—alas! that many find it so!—
 Some bitter spirits to the front will
 press,
 And seek to add to thy despair—thy woe—
 Aye — who will even mock at thy
 distress—

'Tis true that sorrow lies beyond the
 power
 Of some to even comprehend its deeps—
 After hath passed the tempest's heavy
 hour,
 Some wonder any wretch looks back
 and weeps—

But still *all* hearts are not corrupt and
 hollow,
 Nor hath love *always* from the thunder
 fled—
 And sunny skies dark skies will sometimes
 follow,
 When we re-gather all the rose-leaves
 shed—

Aye! this is true, have we—most gratefully
 found,
 Even in the hour of anguish and of
 pain,
 And true, unswerving friends may then
 abound,
 To cheer our heart, and make life
 bright again!

LESSONS OF LIFE.—I.

THOU can'st not, by a few light strokes,
 erase
 The lines dividing, sharply, "then" and
 "now"—
 Thou can'st not, even by a hand of
 grace,
 Make myrtles suit a mean and common
 brow—

Between two banks a river flows—and
 thick
 Its surface seems with flowers—soiled and
 torn—
 The souls of those who pass shall turn but
 sick
 To see the burden by those waters
 borne;

Thou can'st not cleanse that stream—thy
 very feet
 Would be polluted by its smallest drop—
 Touch with it nothing that is pure and
 sweet,
 Nor long beside it let thy footsteps
 stop;

There are fair river-banks where blossoms
 grow,
 Ready for gathering by a cleanly
 hand—
 As musically-rippling sparkling—flow
 Its waters over beds of silver sand!

Aye! seek those wholesome streams—nor
 go astray—
 Ye may its lilies gather — spotless,
 white—
 Even to the last hours of the parting day,
 When their sweet petals close to *meet*
 the night!

GO BACK!

Go back—to thine own unsweet realms
once more!

'Tis well, though late, thine evil soul
I know:

Come thou not *near* the threshold of our
door,

Or pluck the flowers that in our sunlight
grow.

Once was that door unhasped — aye!
opened wide—

That thou might'st come in—by no
falsehoods tainted—

So dreamt we who knew not thy skin
was dyed,

Thine eyes were false—thy lips with
smiles were *painted*!

False—false—in all things false!—for
every word

Was one to suit a fair and smiling day—

Nor, midst these oily promises one heard

The hoot of owl, the watch-dog's warn-
ing bay!

Into our “holiest of holies” thou
Came'st freely, as one to its mysteries
born—

Why hath that faith departed—so that
now

We think of thee but with the sharpest
scorn?

Because in all things thou hast played the
part

Of Envy—Envy bitter to the core—

Therefore—thou mean of soul—thou false
of heart,

Enter into our home of love no more.

AGAIN—REBUKES TO A

MOURNER.

YET—why look ye on life with those chill
eyes,

And see in all things, sin, disorder,
blight!

Why look ye for the tempests of the skies,
And never for their calmness, for their
light?

Why see ye in the paintings on your walls,
In the sweet flowers by which your fields
are filled,

Only the spots where blighting shadow
falls,

Only the blossoms by the hailstones
killed?

Why visit ye the shepherd's many flocks
Only to count the feeble and the sickly?

Why take thy walks across life's barren
rocks?

Why go where withered leaves fall fast
and thickly?

Seest thou no fairness in wood, lane, or
field?

Is it not sometimes—if no joy—a *duty*,
To learn to see the joys that life can
yield—

The hand of love, of mercy, and of
beauty?

The Hand of God is everywhere—and He,
Who loveth all things will not always
lay

A shadow only on earth, sky, and sea,
Or give sin and disease, alone, their
sway!

LESSONS OF LIFE.—II.

AYE!—if the lessons life can teach are
now

And then by no means pleasant, fret
thou not!

For lines of wisdom rarely mark the brow
Save through acquaintance with life's
varied lot.

Something by counsel may be learned,
but more,

Yes! more a thousand times experience
teaches!

She needs to urge her lessons o'er and
o'er,

Ere we believe the wisdom that *she*
preaches!

Yes! 'tis *her* hand that puts the final
seal

Upon our worldly knowledge—*then* in-
deed,

The weight of words of wisdom one can
feel,
And learn to know the sweet herb from
the weed.

A "little leaven"—but that lesson well
We know!—learnt often by the most
unwise—

A tale our memory oft shall sadly tell,
Of the acquaintance *some* have with—
Dame Lies!

If thou dost find any thou knowest have
been
Her friends—bid them, *as I have done*,
begone!
For Lies have shadowed many a brilliant
scene—
Nature gave some, in lieu of hearts—
a *stone*!

ART THOU SO EVIL?

OH World!—great World—with all thy
varied races—

Aye World!—great World—with all thy
weight of sin—

With so much evil in thy higher places—
With Satan watchful every race to
win—

Art thou so evil as some love to call thee,
Who breathe o'er thee so many a
virtuous sigh?

Art thou so reckless of what might befall
thee—

To shake thy fist at thunders pealed
from high?

Dost thou—after the centuries that are
passed—

Need teaching and improving ever
more?

Have then thy "hills of sin" become so
vast

That they shall even o'ertop the *hills of*
yore!

Or—is it true, as others oft declare,
That thou hast buried many an ancient
crime,

That thou becomest sweeter and more fair,
While slowly marching on the road of
time!

This, truly, we believe of thee—despite
The bitter vision of thy many foes;
Thy heart is stronger — clearer is thy
sight—

Pray it be stronger still ere day shall
close!

TO —.

FRIEND! if thou hast in life *one* faithful
love

But *one*—fear not for any storms of
earth,

Only for storms that reach thee from
above—

Without — beyond — the great world's
width and girth.

And as for others—see thou prize not
those

Who care not for you save in summer
days—

Who turn from you in the dark times of
woes—

And take, through other plains, their
sneaking ways!

Above all!—trust thou never that mean
class

Who "dwell apart" from others—and
who hold

They, therefore, for God's holy ones will
pass?

For 'tis but the old tale—again retold!

Yes! though they boast a pure and lofty
mind,

A cleaner conscience—*quite* untouched
by shame—

Watch yet their oily steps, and thou wilt
find

The old tribe ever is—shall be—the
same!

And once thou knowest them, trust them
no more—

Even though they former principles
revoke—

For thou wilt find them even as before,—
Not near the Upas tree shall thrive the
oak!

THE SWEETLY SIMPLE LIVES OF —SOME!!

WHOM WE HAVE MET IN LIFE.

Yes! what a simple life some souls may
pass,
Away from each and every thorough-
fare—
As plants grow under a protecting glass—
Safe from all blighting, or tempestuous
air—

Who may not fight earth's necessary
wars,
Therefore receive no wounds, can show no
scars—
*Who benefit from much good of their
age,*
Yet never in its toil or strife engage—

Who oft, as sailor, stand upon a shore,
To listen to the thunder's angry roar,
To see the ship-wrecked struggling with
the waves,
Yet seek to save none from their
threatened graves—

Whose thoughts are all on self and how
they best
Shall live—as birds live in a sheltered
nest—
Who gather from "those others'" lands
the foods
They think is needed for themselves—or—
broods.

*And if such hands seem white, they are
but white
That they have been unharmed by noble
fight—
And if their feet bleed not, it is that they
Shrink from all stones that strew a nobler
way!*

WHAT ARE THE LESSONS THAT SOME PREACH TO-DAY?

WHAT are the lessons that some preach
to-day?—
What are the newer paths of human
thought?

Forget each place wherein men knelt to
pray!—
Pass o'er the sorrows by which life is
taught!—

Aye! play-grounds of our churchyards
make!
Let them no more as homes of grief be
felt,
Or to teach patience, for the dear one's
sake,
As by the lost and loved the mourner
knelt!

Dust unto dust—they cry—dust unto dust!
The days for useless mourning long are
past—
Give back its own unto the earth's cold
crust,
And let no knell arrest an earthly
blast!—

These glowing flowers of bygone summer
plains,
With tears beneath earth's grass leave
we entombed,
While tenderly still upon this earth
remains.
The memory of the days through which
they bloomed!

A sweet and sacred memory ever lingers
O'er all fair things so gently put
away,
Aye! buried with such loving, tender
fingers
Until shall come the dawn of fairer
day!

THE FAINTING TRAVELLER.

"How shall I reach the mountain top,
O God!
Few steps have crossed the hard, un-
beaten sod—
The mists are heavy on the narrow way,
The light is twilight—not the light of
day—

"A silence, strange and deadly, reigns
around—
I hear no watchdog's bark—no human
sound—
I see no longer glimpse of level plain,
I know not how mine homestead to re-
gain—

"In this mysterious solitude is heard
Not even the gentle evensong of bird—
Stillness — an awful stillness seems to
 reign,
I call aloud, yet call, alas! in vain!

"The mist surrounds me, O my God—
 its veil
Shuts from my gaze the fairness of Thy
 sky—
I fear much lest my trembling steps
 should fail
To gain the realm where Thou art
 throned on high."

Oh! yet go bravely on—there is a spot
So fair above!—where storms shall trouble
 not—

*Keep thou a steady step — a fearless
 breast—*

Go on—brave soul, and leave to God the
 rest!

RETROSPECTION.

Joys of our youth—ye greet us not again—
Call loudly as may we call in vain—
The sweet briar is not fragrant as of yore—
The pale, sweet primrose gather we no
 more—

Days of our youth—it is in vain we seek
To bring back thy sweet blushes to our
 cheek,

Or pleasure's glowing smile to the dull
 eye—

The rich and burnished gold to love's fair
 sky—

The birds sing not as once we heard them
 sing,

The butterfly looks duller on the wing,
The rose hath lost the bloom of other
 years,
Nor seems the corn so golden in the ears—

Yet there are pleasures—youth can never
 know—

Even when our dark locks shine with age's
 snow,

Joys that may even seem to us more bright
That they are shining with a setting
 light.

So sorrow for the past, dear friend, no
 more—

Gloom seems around thee now, but light
 before—

And sorrow's darkness soon shall melt
 away

Into the glory of Heaven's coming day!"

DEPRESSED AND WEARY WERT THOU, O MY SOUL!

YET oft times wert thou weary, O my
 soul!

Forgetting after gloom succeedeth light—
The storms of night shall into distance
 roll,

The dawn will break, if slowly, from
 the night!

True!—crimes repeat themselves; the sins
 of old

Are still recurrent in these later times—
And meanness flourishes and vice is bold—
And earth is darkened by her peoples'
 crimes—

Still is the fretful heart—the headstrong
 brain—

Storms swiftly rise, to pass but slowly
 o'er—

We fight our wars again, and yet again,
Man toils, and sins, and suffers, as
 before.

The weak, the vain, and the conceited
 seem

Of every age—still standing in the light!
And Life is other than a pleasant dream—
A battle even for the strong to fight!

Yet hope—hope ever! God shall not de-
 ceive!

Some have dull eyes that only see the
 gloom—

There shall be joy for all ye that believe—
A fairer, sweeter life beyond the tomb!

A NATURAL SIGH!

OH!—we may sigh—
Would we could gracefully as autumn die!

That, undismayed by early winter's blast,
Our days were calm, untroubled to the
last!

Would we could fall
Softly as leaves, as skies of earth grow
grey—
Could meet the fate that Heaven decrees
for all
With gentle, but yet beautiful, decay—

Aye!—pass as flowers,
When slowly comes the fate that all
must meet—
Submissive to the close of earthly hours,
And to the last, though withered, ever
sweet!

Before their time
Come often the great tempests that
destroy,
Carrying away the roses in their prime,
Ere they complete their mission here
of joy!

So—well we pray
That Heaven His lightning from our
path may keep
Until the calm close of Earth's troubled
day.
After both wars and tempests cometh
sleep!

LOVE! THOU HAST GUARDED ME.

LOVE! thou hast guarded me against my
foes—
And in thy mysteries they shall bear no
part—
Neither in the sweetness of home's repose,
Nor in the fonder secrets of the heart.

Thou art as a strange world to them, O
Love—
They note not—they—poor souls—they
golden skies;
They cannot bear the light that, from
above,
Shines down into the depth of thy dark
eyes—

They know no secrets of thy glowing
lands—

Thy scented wreaths their brows have
never graced—

They see not palm trees on thy desert
sands—

The snowdrops springing in the Arctic
waste—

They never wander underneath thy light,
They have no reverence for thy gracious
laws—

They cannot bear the tender hours of
night,

The light of stars each one of these
abhors—

Thou art a stranger to them and thy lute
Is touched for hardened ears of theirs
in vain—

To thy sweet pleading they are ever mute,
Love—cross thou not their acrid paths
again!

Love—my last earthly thoughts shall be
of thee—

Love—I shall meet thee in Eternity!
And dwell for ever in thy light sublime,
That was—that is—that shall be—to all
time!

A QUESTION.

OH! wilt thou in a fairer world be mine!
And, clothed no longer in earth's robe
of dust

Still: with the same light will thy calm
eyes shine—

The light of an undying love and trust?

From fairer regions hath thy spirit come—
Yea!—from a region of undying light—
And earth was never fit to be its home,
It was not made for sorrow, or for
blight.

I know none like thee in this world of
ours—

For ever honest, steadfast, brave, and
true—

Not full of boastful, but of sterling
powers;—

And lofty goals alone are in thy view.

Love ever walks beside thee on thy path—
 Still in thy griefs her faithful heart is
 warm—
 And sterling honour sits upon thy hearth,
 Nor leaves thee at the breaking of the
 storm—
 Youth fades away, but love is as a rock—
 Facing all danger with a fearless eye—
 Nor sinking underneath the tempest's
 shock—
 And looking ever to the sunset sky.

GRATEFUL!

FORGETTING all harsh visions of the past
 In times that are so tender, fair and
 sweet,
 One wanders out beneath that arch so
 vast
 That bounds the ocean lying at our
 feet—
 Sorrow—a little while—seems far away,
 And even her echoes ring not on the
 air—
 She seems a vision of another day,
 When Life's stern brow was one as of
 despair.
 'Tis well to look up when the sky is clear,
 Grateful for the sweet calm of sea and
 land—
 Grateful for the hushed sob and the dried
 tear,
 Grateful for the warm clasp of one true
 hand—
 Ah yes! such wandering hours are but too
 dear,
 Life is *too* happy for a passing while,
 And one forgets its hard and stern
 career,
 The tear that follows even its bright
 smile;
 Ay! happiness do some hold as a
 dream—
 A statue clad in winding sheets and
 shrouds!—
 Yet shall our paths be happier for the
 gleam
 From Heaven that sometimes falleth
 through the clouds!

FAIR IRIDES—BESIDE THE RIVER GROWING.

FAIR Irides*—beside the river growing—
 With the bright water o'er thy flag-leaves
 flowing—
 With the reed-warbler softly, shyly sing-
 ing—
 Amongst the rushes, in the breezes swing-
 ing—
 Growing up shapely, beautiful, and bright,
 And flowering where few passing hands
 could cull—
 Closing thy tender petals with the night
 Or when the sky is stormy—cold, or
 dull—
 Ye look sad in our "library," amid
 The grim, worn tomes of ages long
 ago!
 Where Time hath laid a finger on each
 lid,
 But not—alack! a finger here of snow!
 How many may have paused beside thy
 stream
 In ancient times, to pluck thy blossoms
 fair—
 Ay! as one muses one could almost dream
 Some "Rosamond" had wreathed them
 in her hair!
 Fair Irides—beside the river growing—
 With the bright water o'er thy flag-leaves
 flowing,
 With the reed-warbler softly, shyly singing
 Amongst the rushes, in the breezes swing-
 ing.

THE MYSTERIOUS PINE WOODS!

"He has ridden, with Oberon's horn by his side,
 through the mysterious pine woods."—*The Contem-
 porary Review*, August, 1886.

HERE let us listen to the mournful sighs
 Of the "mysterious pine woods"—as
 they raise
 Their arms, in plaint, to the red sunset
 skies,
 Of the long, ceaseless troubles of their
 days!

* These lovely flowers grow in great profusion along the banks of the rivers Avon and Stour.

Here—near the stream where the reed-warbler sings
 A brilliant visitor flits lightly past,*
 Spreading its fairly-like and gauzy wings—
 Ranging the woods so silent and so vast.

Thou *noble* insect! bright as humming bird,
 And even as dazzling, in its zig-zag flight—
 Although in passing shall no sound be heard—
 A thing of beauty, even strangely bright.

One thinks of the “Midsummer’s Night”
 of long
 Ago, and dreams of fairy times again—
 Titania might have ridden thee — a throng
 Of her attendant fairies in her train!

Thou would’st have rivalled, by thy brilliant eyes,
 The fairest little sprite of wood and glade—
 And by thy wings of beauty and of size
 Shone as a tiny meteor in the shade!

THE VOICE OF THE OCEAN!

Aye! that deep, moaning voice—I hear it still,
 Through the dense woods that face the glowing west—
 That voice!—of an indomitable will—
 That seems to long so hopelessly for rest!

A heavy torpor—like a giant’s sleep,
 Seems sometimes on its broad and sullen face,
 Yet—listening—still is heard the murmurs deep,
 From darkling caves whose windings none may trace.

Aye! sometimes passing mariners may hear
 Strange whispers, thrilling their brave souls with fear—
 Whispers that tell of wrath, of force suppressed,
 Longing to break from an enforced rest!

A voice—that seems to murmur—“I but pause
 To gather greater force ere I arise
 To break the bondage of stern Nature’s laws,
 And even to dare a combat with God’s skies!”

Aye! that deep, moaning voice—I hear it still—
 Through the dense woods that face the glowing west—
 That voice!—of an indomitable will,
 That seems to long so hopelessly for rest!

LESSONS OF LIFE.—III.

LIFE, with its many lessons, passes on,—
 And fathoms deep our early hopes are buried—
 Youth’s cherished dreams as Autumn flowers are wan,
 And Death o’er his dark river Age hath ferried.

Unripened fruits fall from the tree and rot—
 The mildewed harvest careless Labour reaps—
 The sturdy peasant rests within his cot—
 The sleep of death a fair, young princess sleeps—

Our early blossoms wither, and the frown
 Of hatred crushes many glowing dreams—
 Green leaves of spring, alas! will often *brown*—
 Fierce torrents spoil the water-lily’s streams—

* A beautiful dragon-fly, caught in the woods near a stream, on the 9th of August, measured five inches from tip to tip of the wings, and just under three inches from the head to the tail. The body was brown and slender, the wings gauzy—a golden brown, very beautiful and glittering—the head studded with turquoise-like spots.

The friends of youth turn into bitter
foes—

And hidden snakes come out into the
light—

Aim at the unsuspecting fatal blows,
Ere time is theirs to arm to meet the
fight!

Yet have we known Love faithful to the
last—

And triumphing o'er many a faithless
friend—

Withstanding Fortune's changed and bitter
blast,

Her fair flowers blooming to the very
end!

I PRAISE THEE FOR THY TRUTH AND GRACE!

I COULD not praise thee, O thou best one,
more

Than now I praise thee for thy truth
and grace—

*Though thou wert dear in all the years
before,*

Thy later love fills yet a broader space!

If thou hast been by bitter loss dis-
tressed,

And if thy feet have gone in stormy
ways,

*That love, triumphant, feared no trial—
no test—*

Surviving many fierce and hurtful
frays—

And still I grasp thy firm, but gentle
hands,

O love! through every weary hour of
pain—

Death only shall have power to break
those bands

That for so many years have bound us
twain—

One moment's hurt these true hands never
gave

But with some noble purpose of its
own—

But with intent to succour or to save,
This was thy mission — this thy toil
alone.

In darkness ever guarded by thy God,
Thy earthly steps shall cause no soul to
fret—

But, rather, bless the path whereon they
trod,

The brighter for thy star—when it shall
set!

SHATTERED FRIENDSHIPS.

OUR shattered friendships are as shattered
glass,

Whose early beauty *no* hand can re-
store—

Nor even may thy hand — uninjured —
pass

O'er its but shapeless fragments any
more!

As water spilt—ever as water weak,
That in stability shall ne'er excel,

As south winds changeable — as north
winds bleak,

Countless such things of friendship all
can tell!

Aye! and as paths but stony to the
feet—

As shallow pools in which no depths are
found—

As flowers that are no longer fresh and
sweet,

And that had but weak rootlets in the
ground—

Again, as common pebbles of the land

That may be known as worthless by the
wise,

But being polished by a cunning hand
Shall yet delude unpractised—trustful—
eyes.

IT IS NOT WELL TO LIVE LIFE IN A DREAM.

It is not well to live life in a dream,
Although a dream of loveliness — or
rest—

For evil groweth out of things that
seem—

All forms of falsehood needs shall be
unblest.

Far better note the ice whereon you skate
Is dangerous—and loosened from the
shore,
Than learn the perils of thy course too
late,
Aye! when the time to save thyself is
o'er!

It need not make thee sour of heart to
know
That here upon this earth are evil
paths,
That some meet merited, if bitter woe,
That sin may sit by *seeming*-wholesome
hearth!

Aye! thou should'st note the tempests
of the earth,
The griefs of mortals and wherefore they
come,
Or may thy days be of but little worth,
And thou may'st even not protect thy
home—

Yet let such knowledge never blind your
eyes
To the fair things that God on earth
allows,
To paths of spirits saintlike—strong and
wise,
To noble wreaths that crown men's
noble brows.

DREAMS OF OTHER DAYS!

AYE! fare ye well—ye dreams of other
days!

Ye visit me but as the pallid ghosts
That linger in but half-remembered ways—
Around dense forests, or mist-laden
coasts—

Or as storm-beaten vessels, on dim seas,
Stranded at last upon mysterious shores;
Or as ripe fruits—fallen from leafless
trees—
As fair flowers dying down on pathless
moors—

Ye are as stars that fall into the deep,
Nor leave behind a ripple on the waves—
Are now impalpable as shapes that creep—
Curdling the blood — about unhappy
graves—

Ye bring the echoes of a past despair,
An inarticulate, yet dreary moan—
The murmur of a never-banished care,
Linked with this world and with the
world unknown.

Haunt us no more — ye shapes of mid-
night hours—
Leave us but memories of the fair, sweet
flowers.
By moonlight gathered; stolen from the
rest
That shall not be within a mortal's breast!

YET SOFTLY DO YE SOMETIMES COME, O DREAMS!

YET softly do ye sometimes come, O
dreams!
As o'er the earth still night her veil hath
cast
O'er sleeping woods and dales in moon-
light gleams—
And the loud labours of the world seem
past.

Thoughts of the future trouble oft the
brain,
With strange impatience of what is our
own—
Yet foolishly our vision do we strain
To catch some glimpses of the world
unknown!

That strange Hereafter—ah! what shall it
prove?

That unread and that still *imagined*
state—
Shall it be lit by everlasting love,
Or—as some vow—prove but the realm
of hate?

God knoweth!—o'er that distance is a veil—
Our eyes to pierce it but too madly
strain—
And still the future is an unread tale,
And one that mortals seek to solve in
vain!

Yet it need trouble but a little while—
Nor bring much tribulation to the wise!
Beyond we see God's calm, eternal smile,
And look into Eternity's deep eyes!

YES! AS THOU LOVEST ME—

To —.

YES—as thou lovest me—so, dear, do I
Love thee with all my soul, with all my
heart—
Have I not told thee I should surely die
If thou and I were on this earth to part?

Oh, *for* thee—could it save thee from sore
pain,
And could it help thee—gladly would I
give
All that I have on earth—and yet again
How joyfully for thee would also live.

Thou hast been dearer than all words
have told—
More perfect love was thine, from early
years,
Than any I had dreamt that earth could
hold—
Both in the hours of joy and hours of
tears.

Love! in the time I pray may yet be
thine,
Whatever storms break o'er life's later
days,
I pray that on thy placid brow may
shine
A light, the fairest known to human
ways—

The light that shines around a saintly
head—
The light that on few earthly paths is
shed—
The light that in thy steady eyes doth
burn—
That light from Heaven that shall to
Heaven return!

SHADOWS.

SHADOWS of that great World, whose
sounding tread
Is heard, swift marching down its
broadening way,
Memories of bitter weeping for the dead,
Of low, nun-voices that for sinners
pray—

Of musings on man's oft unholy lot—
Heavy with bitter, unavailing grief,
Of Heaven's great voice that now he
heareth not,
As he past records meets with unbelief.

Echoes of mocking laughter, foolish jest—
Of terror's ravings and the shriek of
fear—
Of groans that burst from a tired sufferer's
breast,
Of weary disappointment's silent tear.

Come ye no longer in night's sombre train,
Disturbing the tired sleeper's fevered
breath—
Let but the sweet and holier shades re-
main,
Until the coming of the Last — of
DEATH!

MUSING—AMONGST THE GRAVES.

How strange it feels on churchyard graves
to gaze,
And think one may be lying there ere
long!—
For no one knows the limits of earth's
days—
Or if our sojourn here shall be for long.
And yet man's hour is fixed—the place is
kept
Wherein his bones at last shall lie at
rest—
And though they be uncared for, or un-
wept,
It cannot be the dead shall feel
distressed!

His last home is, to man, an unknown
spot—
A veil hangs heavily before his sight—
And looking into darkness we know not
But that we reach the hidden bourne
to-night!

And hopelessly we lift our anxious eyes—
We seek, but seek in vain, to raise the
veil,
We hear no echo from the far-off skies
Of what to earth still rests an unknown
tale.

Futurity!—oh! tell us what art thou?
 The wildest doubts man's mind have
 overcast,
 To cloud with shadow his too anxious
 brow.
 Yet—pray!—that Hope be faithful to
 the last!

GOD OF ETERNITY.

God of Eternity—thou God unseen,
 Yet *felt*—in every season—every clime,
 Whose footsteps on the Universe have been
 In times of sowing, as in harvest time—

Thy grace I supplicate and without fear,
 Kneeling beneath thy glorious skies at
 Night,
 But that my pleadings reach that far-off
 sphere
 Where Thou art dwelling evermore in
 Light!

God of a myriad worlds—the faintest cry
 Sent up to Thee by some poor, pleading
 soul,
 May even reach that wondrous space on
 high,
 Where worlds evolve, but where no
 thunders roll.

Keep Thou my memory green—Almighty
 power!—
 For all the deeds that Thou hast done
 below—
 Aye! through the passing of each earthly
 hour,
 Teach us Thy glory and Thy might to
 know!

God of Eternity—thou God unseen,
 Yet felt, in every season—every clime,
 Whose footsteps on the Universe have
 been
 In times beyond our human sense of
 time!

AS STORMY DAYS GROW
CLEAR.

As stormy days grow clear — and near
 their close
 Sets in that peace from whence the tempest
 rose,

So—freed from many doubts, from many
 fears—
 Our life goes gently through its later
 years.

The clouds have passed, the winds have
 sunk to sleep,
 The weary eyes no longer wake to weep,
 The brow no more is hopeless and op-
 pressed,
 The troubled soul hath found a later rest.

God's will be done! and if the soul could
 know
 One restful faith in its dark hours of woe,
 It had not then all sweeter hope refused,
 Nor by the tempest felt so deeply bruised!

God's will be done! Yet it is hard to feel,
 When griefs befall us that are sternly real,
 That faith must trust—that hearts must
 not repine—
 But still must sigh—Thy will be done—
 not mine!

So have I found it in my heaviest grief—
 Finding in still despair but poor relief.
 Amidst the thunder and the lightning's
 flashes
 Have I arisen from sackcloth and from
 ashes.

IN THE EVE.

THROUGH the sweet woods I wander in
 the eve
 Holding one faithful hand, for ever
 mine—
 And look up into eyes I would not grieve—
 That ever with the light of love shall
 shine.

Fair may'st thou be, O thou declining day!
 Though we may note thy gently paling
 light;
 Slowly thy heavy clouds may roll away—
 Softly, if sadly, fall the shades of night.

Yes! full of tender and untroubled peace,
 With hearts that only beat with faithful
 love—
 As sounds of earth grow softer and then
 cease,
 We watch the purple glow that spreads
 above.

1887.

JUBILEE ODE.

GOD—COUNTRY—HOME.

THREE golden words!—that three are yet as one
To those that read and understand are seen
Marked on the Crown that, bright with England's sun,
Upon our Queen's wise brow these fifty years hath been!

Great through her virtues! few in truth there are—
It may be none—who claim a page more bright
In regal history—through times of war
And peace, as through the days of Darkness and of Light!

Some noble Kings and Queens our England knew—
Some stately Rulers in her earlier days—
Yet were there none more simply brave and true,
None with more light from Heaven to smile upon their ways!

Sorrow hath struck, but never broken down—
Grief's shadows on her path have been, but yet
Not even misfortune's saddest, darkest frown
Hath ever made our Queen, God, Country, Home—forget!

Aye! Death full many tender ties might sever,
But Duty kept those royal footsteps straight—
To God, Country, and Home thus faithful ever,
May our Queen pass on to the Golden Gate
That will be opened, in the days to come,
When she her loved may join, in their immortal Home!

VARIETIES FROM A SCRAP BOOK.

Composed at very irregular dates from æt. 16 to æt. 65.

PART I.

INTRODUCTION.

HERE, my good friends, are scraps of many sorts,
But chiefly the light thoughts of laughing hours!
Here shall ye find, who search—the gay retorts
Fitted for folly's moods—weeds, thistles, flowers!

And here are "snips" of an old-fashioned "dress"!—

As one might term them—*ancient* folks to please—
Nothing through *grandeur* will, at least, *oppress*—

The robes are those that *most* might wear with ease!

(*Most*, but not *all*, if I may be allowed
To just except *some* few of silken scraps!)—

Meanwhile the listener may hear voices loud

And soft — and sometimes even mysterious "raps!"—

Though not in the "new science" — as some call it,

Or rather *did* so—have I faith, I own;
As to *my* science little can befall it,
Seeing I practise only when alone,

Or with a spirit that's congenial, quite!—
And always when the world around is dreaming—

Aye! in the quiet "Watches of the Night,"
When on the earth the Lady Moon is beaming!—

Meanwhile — take all the "scraps" for what they're worth,
Ye readers, both of sweet, or crabbed, minds!
For many are the fruits that grow on earth—
Some rich and pulpy, some with bitter rinds!

THE GENEROUS KNIGHT;

OR,

SIR ALBERT'S NOBLE SELF-SACRIFICE.

SIR ALBERT was a gallant knight,
He cared—not he! for any foe!—
His heart was brave, his sword was bright,
Oft fatal at a single blow!

His glance was ever keen and steady,
His spear was always in its place,
For combat he was quick and ready,
As foremost in all manly chase.

What prizes his keen vision saw
His daring hand was swift to reach—
A conqueror in Love and War,
He slew by blows and won by speech!

And so was he beloved by most—
Of brave and kindred souls, at least—
And soon became a welcomed toast
At every fight, or game, or feast!

Young—handsome—eloquent and brave,
Untainted by one breath of shame,
How *could* the maidens fail to rave
Whene'er they heard Sir Albert's name!

Some vowed that it was worse than sad
That none that lofty Being claimed!
So many for his sake went mad,
Or single for his sake remained!

It was, indeed, a sorry plight
For many fair and sighing maids—
Their blue eyes lost their roguish light,
And white hairs gathered in their braids!

Ah! cruel it seemed but *one* to wed,
And leave the hapless rest to die!—
Yet *all* he could not marry!—said
Sir Albert, with a heavy sigh!

So this kind-hearted knight had vowed,
Since but one bride he was allowed,
Of loving wife would he have none!—
“Aye!” — groaned he — “*I will live alone!*”

TO A SON OF NEW ZEALAND!

(A grandchild, aged seven.)

My Ronald—fearless little boy—
Thy father's pride, thy mother's joy—
What are thy little fingers doing—
What are thy little steps pursuing?

Brave little lad! in laughing morn
Wandering through woods, or fields of
corn,
To watch the brilliant forest birds,
Or wanderings of the lowing herds—

I wonder if thy thoughtful eyes
Are watching now the sunset skies,
Or if thy small, but active feet,
Are straying where the flowers are sweet!

I hear those feet,—so strangely bold—
Have often through the forest strolled—
To gather wild flowers, sweet and bright,
To deck thy mother's room at night—*

The day may never dawn for me
When I thy face, my boy, shall see—
But often, still, my thoughts shall stray
To thy wild home, so far away!

TO LITTLE ZOË.

(A grandchild, aged four.)

O Zoë! little blue-eyed girl!
With hair so sunny in its curl!
With full as pretty, pouting mouth,
As maidens of the classic South—

O Zoë! little City maiden!
Thy steps should be in field, or plain—
Thy pretty, plump, round arms flower-
laden—
Thy soft lips red with bilberry stain!

Or by the sea-shells on the shore,
When winds and waves are all asleep,
Thy little basket brimming o'er
With treasures of the mighty deep!

Or peeping into “birds'-nests-hedges”!
With bright glance and inquiring lip—
Avoiding all the bank's green sedges,
For fear thy little step should slip!

Or roaming through the Autumn-wood
Of hazel nut, so ripe and brown,
To find where squirrels hide their food!
Or chasing fleecy thistle-down.

Or butterflies, with brilliant wings
Tempt thee to run from flower to
flower!
Or listening—as the blackbird sings
From elm-trees, or from May-bush
bower.

But wheresoever stray thy feet,
I pray, dear, that they may be strong—
That all thy labours may be sweet,
And all thy happy days be long!

I pray that in thy future life
Thou still may'st keep that sinless brow,
As free from bitterness and strife,
As full of gentle peace—as now!

TO LITTLE PHILIP.

(A grandchild, aged four.)

O PHILIP! with the look so quaint!
With something of judicial brow,

* “Ronald is very fearless, and goes out in the woods by himself to bring me home a nosegay of wild flowers.”—Extract from his mother's letter written in 1884.

It would be difficult to paint
Thy features as I see them now!

So gentle yet so full of fun,
Not altogether plain to read!
Thou art a puzzle, little one—
Although a pretty one, indeed!

And yet whatever quaint and wise
Speaks from thy bright, if childish eyes,
No one of us can hold the spell
By which thy future to foretell!

Thy forehead, dear, is broad and fair—
Thy future life may slumber there—
Yet, though its charms we might depict
Its griefs to come can none predict!

O Philip! gentle as thou art,
And full of pretty, childish ways—
Who can foretell what brilliant part,
Thy wits may play in future days!

For me—my hopes are bright and high,
Of what may be in life's estate!
Although I dare not prophesy
I yet *believe* thy future great!

At least *this* prophecy is mine—
Whate'er may try thy youthful heart,
Yet in the days that may be thine
Thou wilt but play a noble part!

That never grief, or shame's sad tears,
Will cloud the sunshine of thy years—
But noble deeds and noble worth
Shall make thy glorious crown on earth!

WHEN LOVE AND DARING ARE IN LEAGUE.

A TALE of old Romance, 'tis true,
But far more true than most romance is!
That only raves of "eyes of blue,"
Of "cruel fate"—or "Cupid's lances!"

Nor does it end in self-delusion—
As past romances oft have done—
Or gold "pushed front," with coarse in-
trusion—

Love fought the battle and Love *won*!

I sing the knight for maiden's eyes—
No recreant of the vulgar crowd!

He was, in sooth, a noble prize,
Of which might any maid be proud!

Ah! age of fashion, and of gold—
Of Fancy's ball—of Virtue's "drum,"
But few romances can be told
In days that are so dull—so *glum*!

Oh! days of many a magic spell!
When halls with Love's own music
rang!—
Times of which, now, few poets tell—
But which in other times they sang!

Now Greed, or Fashion shakes the dice!—
And in this coarse and brazen age
Men crave — where Love would once
suffice—
'Court dress and showy equipage!

Yet, in the days of old Romance,
Such "gauds," they say, were not un-
known—
Love won the game, if Envy's lance
Oft at her radiant crown was thrown!

Her eyes were bright — her eyes were
blue—
And tears and smiles would struggle
there!
Her rounded cheeks were pink of hue,
A sketch oft made and always fair!

When seen beneath the cottage eaves
Her brow was all untouched by care—
And roses threw their glowing leaves
Upon her rippling, auburn hair!

'Twas then a noble knight rode by—
('Tis true, and not a thing for laughter!)
He bore her to another sky,
And they were happy, ever after!

This is the tale I love the best!
When Love and Daring are in league—
If to mean souls it lacks the zest
Of rank, or high (or *low*!) intrigue!

A WARNING!

THE Violet opened eyes of blue,
The lily raised its stately head—
The roses tittered—"It is true!"
" 'Tis even as you told! "—they said!

Two lovers, through soft twilight hours
Were whispering, in a world of flowers,
A world where rose and eglantine
Shone softly in the first moonshine—

And as the evening shades drew round,
Fair buds and blossoms, leaves, and
stems,
Seemed as with very diamonds *crowned*,
For everywhere shone brilliant gems!

And oh! what laughter! — how they
giggled,
Their fair heads nodding—one by one!
And even the beans and pea-stalks wrig-
gled,
And almost screamed—"Yes! this is
fun!"

"Pray! have you heard the news to-
night?"—
One upstart little larkspur said—
"If not, I know you'll laugh out-
right!"—
He added, as he wagged his head!

The wallflower raised her fragrant lid—
Geranium opened his red eye
To hear what earthly beings did
Beneath the quiet moonlit sky!

Again—what silvery laughs they laughed—
With what sweet affectation sighed—
What cups of sparkling dew they quaffed,
To healths of bridegroom and of bride!

They told their brother-fays about it—
Still worse—they told an elfish sprite,
Whose fun it was to go and shout it
With mocking jeers through all the
night!

Sweethearts! I tell this tale to warn
All, wandering by the pale moon-
light—
But not for those who lovers scorn
And only speak of them with spite!

No—truly!—tenderly I speak
To warn our sweethearts *not* to seek
To breathe at even twilight's hours
Their vows amongst the listening
flowers!

FASHION'S FOOLS!—I.

NOTE.—These lines were written during the fashionable rage for the "daffadown-dilly," as children and rustics call it.

AH! "daffadown-dilly"—
How sad—that a flower
With a fashion but silly
Is linked for an hour!

Thou bringest us thoughts of the sunshine
of spring,
Of the bird in its nest—the wild bee on
the wing,
The path through the forest—the green,
mossy bank
Where the blue-bell is bright, or where
hemlock grows rank—

Ah! "daffadown-dilly,"
Thou flower of quaint name—
Some say as "Lent lily"
Now best known to fame—

However this be, quite the rage of the
hour,
Though thou hast no scent for the fine
lady's bower,
Nor yet art as primrose, or violet, sweet—
Nor fair as the eyebright that blooms at
our feet.

Oh! sweetest—as blowing
Ere flowers are profuse,
Of colour not glowing
Like scarlet, or puce—

But yet of a hue that is cheerful and gay,
A harbinger often, of Spring's coming
day
A blossom for poets, but not for a fool,
Nor symbol, nor emblem—for folly's vain
school.

Yes! "daffadown-dilly,"
'Tis sad that a flower
With fashion but silly
Is linked for an hour!

Ourselves, we would welcome thee, even
as now,
As a flower of past centuries—fit for the
brow
Of our fair, jocund Spring—full of colour
and light,
A prophet of days—yet more sunny and
bright!

FASHION'S FOOLS!—II.

Go! cover up that painted face!

It sickens me to see the red—
There is not even the faintest trace
Of youthfulness—all bloom hath fled.
Ah! hide not thus those tender locks—
So fair with Age's reverent snow—
That glowing colour only shocks
The eyes that gaze on it, you know!

For all things are, in season, fair,
With each a beauty of its own—
The dark, bright eyes, the sunny hair,
And even the wrinkles Time hath sown!
There's wisdom in each crooked line—
(Not always, although *some* believe so!)
Those youthful masks that are not thine
I loathe them all, for they deceive so.

No freshness lurks in withered flowers,
They warn us but of life's decay—
They tell us but of bygone hours,
Not whisper of a fresher day.
I would have all things in their season,
I would have all things fair with truth,
I would have nothing out of reason,
Or stained by Folly's after ruth.

So even a winter-rose I greet,
With more of sorrow than of joy:
Yes! all things are in season sweet—
Beyond—have much of shame's alloy.
Oh! youth is beautiful, and age
Hath much of sadness in its years,
Yet stain thou not its honoured page
With sickly sighs and futile tears!

Life hath its seasons, like the earth—
They come and go—and so are o'er—
But there shall be another birth —
When summer shall be ours once more.
Look not—look not so sadly back,
With quivering lip and tear-stained eye,
Thou yet may'st tread a happier track,
There yet may dawn a brighter sky!

WHAT DOST THOU SEE—
PHILOSOPHER?

As through the world thou takest thy small
way,
As in this life thou livest thy short day,

What dost thou see—Philosopher! whose
eyes

Are keen to read the lessons of the wise?

Here note the man who careth but for
pelf—

And here the woman—worshipping her-
self—

And here the teacher, who but nonsense
teaches—

And here the preacher, who but folly
preaches!

Here is the sinner, with his weight of
crimes—

Here are the Pharisees, of later times,
The "holy ones," who live apart from
"others,"

As surer far of Heaven than are their
brothers!

These run in modern days the old-world
races—

Each for his little time — all in their
places—

Their comrade Vice—with manners more
refined!—

Her *speech* is sweeter—not her soul, or
mind!

Oh! and for such one feels a righteous
scorn,

They, like old fowls, go picking o'er
earth's corn,

Spoiling the best, while cackling o'er the
bad,

Each—man, or woman, Pharisee, or cad!

THE ROOT OF ALL THINGS.

TRUTH is the root of all things on this
earth—

Truth in eternity shall prove her worth—
Though Falshood for a time may hold her
place—

Yet time shall rub the paint from her
mean face.

Believe in Truth—let none with specious
plea

Draw thy attention from her golden
store—

Believe her strength is as a mighty sea—
Believe she shall "endure for ever-
more."

And Truth shall not her followers de-
grade—

Let not her, sometimes *rugged* moun-
tains, daunt!—

Be less even of her sternest notes afraid
Than of those silver strains will False-
hood chaunt.

And Falsehood's garments never shall be
sweet—

It wears them often o'er a leper's
skin—

And it shall put smart shoes upon its
feet,

And yet fear not the unclean road of
sin!

Yet Truth is rooted deeper on this earth,
And in Eternity shall prove her worth—
Fear ye no storms that shall beset her
ways,

But see that each one for her welfare
prays!

OUR "CHEERFUL" SOULS!

THEY scold the whole great world around
—they swear

None sweeter than themselves dwell *any-
where*—

Although no hand their brows hath ever
crowned,

Rather hath Fame upon them coldly
frowned!

They from all other souls "elect" to
dwell—

As we have heard some, with derision,
tell—

Of one thing only seemed they always
sure,

No *other* souls possessed, so strong — so
"pure"!

About another world they hold a creed
One hears them but confess in hours of
need,

Aye! of some Place whose Gate is
fastened well

And tightly, save when *they* shall ring the
bell!

For—that one realm of Light is made for
them—

All others' luckless souls do they condemn

To that especial, pretty place you know,
Where there is fire!—if not a "cheerful"
glow!

Yet where, 'tis thought, there are no
"cheerful" faces!—

Queen Didos, and so forth, crowd up
all places,

While Pharisees of modern times, one
fears,

There follow less agreeable careers,
Less marked with "sleekness" and with

oily crimes,

Than mark the Pharisees of early
times!

'TIS THE WAY OF CERTAIN SOULS!

THE unloved and unloving disbelieve
In Love, and swear her vows shall but
deceive!—

To the unvirtuous we vainly tell
What noble spirits still with us shall
dwell!

The cowardly at courage mock — and
sneer

That it is but disguised, but well-masked
fear—

Such think all men are craven in their
souls,

Who cower in secret when the thunder
rolls!

A vicious man is conscious but of evil—
Derides a faith in God — not in the
Devil!—

Insists that Good, on Earth, is but a
myth—

That even the oak is rotten at the pith!

He saith no fruit was e'er without a spot
Disfiguring the fairness of its skin—
In *honest* beauty he believeth not,
But treats it as the robe of secret sin!

What might awaken Conscience he refuses
To hear — others for all good work
abuses—

For rarely can'st thou help such spirits—
they

Go with cold obstinacy on their way!

SUCH NICE PEOPLE!

SUCH nice people, Oh! they said 'twas sad!—
But all the world was "going to the bad!"
We all were "ignorant" and "feeble"—
they
Alone walked in a "pure," a *Christian*
way!

Such nice people — and they said that none
Could take more holy paths beneath the sun—
And all they did was certain to be right—
Their bosoms than the snowdrop were more white!

Such nice people—Oh! so *very* nice—
Nothing of evil could *their* souls entice!—
Their upper lip with scorn most holy, curled,
Whene'er they thought upon the wicked world!

Oh! just *so* good were they, they could not speak
Of *others* save in Condescension's tone—
And like old Pecksniff they were all "*so* sleek,"*
And never fault, or error would they own!

Oh! *such* nice people!—ne'er before were seen
Such spotless souls upon this earth, you know—
A pity 'twas we were not *quite* so "*green*"
As to believe in a mock-pious show!

But—*such* nice people, and they said 'twas sad
To see the whole world "going to the bad!"
For all of us were dull or "feeble"—
they
Alone walked in a "pure," a *Christian*
way!

TO —.

ONE WHO DISBELIEVES IN MODERN VIRTUE.

UNHAPPY thou, and meriting much pity,
Who knows of no sweet souls upon this earth—
Let none at thy expense become too witty,
Thou art, in truth, no subject for our mirth!

Unhappy thou! — one *really* for thee grieves—
Who seems to think we all are steeped in crimes,
Or follies—'tis with pity one believes
That thou dost march not with improving times!

One feels that one might show thee quite "a lot"
Of noble steps upon earth's modern paths!—
Oh! if in Virtue thou believest not
Is it that she knows not *thy* household hearths?

Yet there are many, many lives that dwell
Upon the myriad plains of Earth, we know,
Who happy records of her virtues tell,
Such as would make a good man's cheek to glow!

Thou must be without friends, unhappy one,
Or little of great deeds thyself hast done—
Or thou may'st lack a feeling, full of grace,
Of honour for the noble in Life's race!

THE SAME OLD SHOES!

IF thou a faithful friend for life would choose,
Amongst the Pharisees, my friend, go never—
For thou wilt find they wear the same old shoes
They wore of old—a make that wears for ever!

* "What a sleek, sly chap he (Mr. Pecksniff) is! Just like a tom-cat, ain't he?"— See *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

By flowing robes they sometimes may
disguise,
No doubt, those articles of old-world
shape,—
Yet all may recognise them, who are
wise—
Though o'er them carefully those folds
they *drape!*

You'll note them shrinking from "the
world," and dwelling
· Apart in some calm, sanctified seclusion,
With some dear friend, who everywhere
is telling
About their "goodness" — to that
world's confusion!

"Purer than others!"—'tis the old "Hall-
mark!"
(And "live for self," is secretly
another!)
"Loving the light" while others "love the
dark,"
In all things being better than a
brother!—

Or sister!—for alas! that we must vex
The souls of many — when we need
avow
Some Pharisees are of the gentler sex,
With that same "Hall-mark" stamped
upon the brow!

So if thou a true friend for life would
choose,
Amongst the Pharisees, my friend, go
never—
For thou wilt find they wear the same old
shoes
They wore of old—a make that wears
for ever!

TRUST THEM NOT!

TRUST them not!
They will deny thee in the hour of gloom,
When shadows heavily have marked thy
way,
When all thy summer flowers have lost
their bloom,—
And when thy paths are rough—thy skies
are grey!

Trust them not!
Though they may give thee kindly words
and smiles—
In storms their lips will chill, their
smiles will fade,
And they will use a thousand little wiles
By which each oily promise to evade!

Trust them not!
They are thine but in times of fruits and
flowers,
And when the grapes have ripened on
thy wall,
But not when thou art troubled—or in
sorrow's hours,
Not when thy blighted fruits unripened
fall!

Trust them not!
True! they are thine when all thy steps
are strong,
And when the sun shines down into thine
eyes—
They are thine when thy days are bright
and long,
But not when tempests overrule thy
skies—

Yes, trust them not!
They will deny thee in the hour of gloom,
When shadows heavily have veiled thy
way,
When all thy summer flowers have lost
their bloom,
And when thy paths are rough—thy skies
are grey!

A SONG OFTEN HEARD!

OH! their words but *seem* to be kind, but
their hearts are hard and cold—
For, alas! they are not the friends in
whose love we believed, of old!

They come with the offer of help, it is
all in the work of the day,
'Tis the road that they take for them-
selves—they do not go out of their
way—
They think that their deeds look well in
the World's big, roving eyes,
And the World, in judging of Charity,
should not be over-wise!

Oh! their words but *seem* to be kind, but
 their hearts are hard and cold,
 For, alas! they are not the friends in
 whose love we believed of old!

We thought them kindly once, in the
reasonable ways
 That can touch the heart but little, or by
 their blame or praise,
 And in all that they said and did there
 was not "too much" of the beauty
 Of love—but rather the flavour of never
 a *pleasant* duty!

Oh! their words but *seem* to be kind, but
 their hearts are hard and cold,
 For, alas! they are not the friends in whose
 love we believed, of old!

With *themselves* they seem good friends
 —as saying, "How good are we!
 Could it only be like us, how pure
 would the wide world be!
 We will seek to guide its steps from the
 ways that lead below,
 We will show it the better paths—the
 paths *we* tread, you know!"

Oh! their words but *seem* to be kind, but
 their hearts are hard and cold,
 For alas! they are not the friends in whose
 love we believed, of old!

"'Tis our *wish* to teach them to follow
 the holy lives *we* lead—
 The word that we speak in season—how
 goodly it is, indeed!
 It may teach them the holy way, the way
 that they all should tread!—
 And in saying this, we *know*, there is
 nothing more to be said!"

Oh! their words but *seem* to be true, but
 their hearts are hard and cold,
 For, alas! they are not the friends in
 whose love we believed, of old!

So they go their ways and again men
 see it in their eyes—
 That they think that of all the world they
 are the only good and wise,
 That they sleep the sleep of the just, in
 their easy beds at night,
 For they vow they *should* be happy as
 they *always* do the *Right*!

'TIS THE OLD WORLD'S "WAY"!

(MERELY A SIMILE!)

'Tis the Old World's "way!"—when the
 "sick lion" recovers,
 That world for his friendship seeks
 again his den!
 They are sweet and gentle—*then*—as a fair
 girl's lovers—
 'Tis the way of women, but also, that of
 men!

But when that lion was weak and his
 strong eyes dim—
 When his healthy roar became but a
 feeble mutter,
 'Twas the best of times, of *course*, to hurl
 at him
 All the worst reproaches that their lips
 could utter!

Should the sick—of men!—grow bright
 and strong again
 'Tis a different scene, at once, *some*
 "friends" enact—
 You shall even remind them of the past,
 in vain,
 They will, simply, just deny each bitter
 fact!

When the bee of honey hath given all his
 store,
 And his tired wings have no longer
 power to fly,—
 When the worn-out mules can burdens
 bear no more
 They are then destroyed, turned out, or
 left to die!

And he who hath *not* this lesson learnt,
 methinks,
 Can nothing know of the world he lives
 and dies in—
 But is as an owl, that sits and blinks—and
 blinks,
 Nor has seen the "daylight" of the
 world he—flies in!

And the child whose hand was once
 severely burnt—
 Will hardly put that hand in the fire
 again!

'Tis a lesson some have far too sharply
learnt,—
Of the Old World's "way" to *quite*
forget the pain!

UNDER BLUE SKIES—

UNDER blue skies 'tis sweet to rest awhile,
And to look forward to a world more
fair,

One glowing with a bright, eternal smile,
Free from all mortal grief—all mortal
care.

Shall flowers not blossom there? — ah!
not the flowers

Of earth that "wither at the north
wind's breath"—

Whose blight oft fills with grief our sum-
mer bowers,

And leaves us trembling at the power of
death!

For in that realm the flowers shall ever
bloom

Under no sunlight that shall shift, or
fade—

They know not of the shadows of the
tomb

That sadden here the hill, the field,
the glade—

A world wherein the sky is ever blue—

And where no storms conceal the moun-
tain crest,

Ah, yes! a world where love is ever true,

And where the wilder passions find their
rest!

That world—that unknown world! and
shall we then

And thence look back upon earth's toiling
men,

Remembering we once shared their
troubled lot?

Or shall we, looking back, yet know
them not!

A LOVE LETTER!

AH! sweetest—thou who in thyself dost
hold

All that is pride and joy to me on earth,

Love is to thee a spirit never old,
And as a gem of even priceless worth!

Love may be grey, but thou wilt worship
still,

With all—aye! more than all the strength
of youth—

Her voice is scarce so strong—and yet shall
thrill

Thy heart with all the glory of her
truth—

The rose is withered by the autumn breath,
But though so withered shall be still
thy rose!—

Until the very hour of bitter death
No flower more fair thy faithful spirit
knows.

Thine eyes are ever those of faithful love,
Love even deep and boundless as the
sea—

And looking from the earth to realms
above

So do I link that life with thoughts of
thee!

Thou wilt not change!—although mine
hair is grey—

Nor shall our hearts—O Love!—our
youth forget—

So will we, side by side, pace on our way,
Until for us the sun of life shall set!

THOU ART NOT THE WORST OF EVILS—DEATH!

DEATH! *thou* art not the worst of evils!—
thou

May'st come without a shadow on thy
brow,

May'st even wear, on that dread face of
thine,

A look that hath, by some, been felt—
divine!

Death!—there are forms more evil than
thy form,

And eyes more cruel than even are
thine eyes—

Death!—there are hearts that scarcely are
more warm

Than thine, beneath *some* bitter modern
skies!

Death!—there are voices—living—that inspire

Far more of dread than can *thy* hollow tone—

As there are eyes filled with more sombre fire

Than ever sombre eyes of thine can'st own!

Thou can'st be merciful—but there are those

That have less mercy—far—than often shown

By thee — who are our secret, dastard foes,

Whose hearts are cold as even the coldest stone—

No! for, despite thy sure and fatal dart,
Not from pure malice thou our blood wilt shed—

There are those who will stab one to the heart,

And whom far more than thee, O
Death! men dread!

SOME FAREWELL THOUGHTS.

(Date, about 1844 or 1845.)

I GO again where grass waves high
Above the pheasant's nest,

I go where even the very sky
Looks placid and at rest,—

I leave for lonely fields, love,
The City's crowded square—

The roll of carriage wheels, love,
I shall not hear them there—

I go where I can wander out, beneath the
moonlight pale,

And listen to the voices of the forest and
the vale!

Ah! sweet it were to be once more

Where I may sit alone,

And watch the shadows stealing o'er
That spot I call mine own—*

It is not where the beech trees droop
Above the rustic paling,

Nor where the wild flowers love to
group,

And ivy leaves are trailing—

No!—it is but a lonely spot, where only
pine trees wave,
And shade with melancholy boughs, a new
and quiet grave!

I go again, where grass waves high

Above the pheasant's nest,

I go—where even the very sky

Looks placid and at rest—

And yet I would, as now we part,

Pray thou may'st have a calmer heart,

Nor ever shed the bitter tears

That may be mine, in coming years—

No—but that even thy life may be as
beautifully bright

And placid as that soft blue sky that o'er
us bends to-night!

FAIR—FAIR AND BEAUTIFUL THIS WORLD MIGHT BE—

LINES TO —.

FAIR—fair and beautiful this world might
be,

Even though some paths are with few
talents gifted,

If there were more of noble souls like
thee,

With eyes so true—with eyes to Heaven
uplifted.

One dreams that Heaven to us hath some-
times sent

An angel, even if in an earthly form,
To help us through the weary punishment
Of mortal life, in time of grief, of
storm!

Yet withered, *sapless* souls one meets in
life,

Whose presence seems to blight the
household hearths—

Whose falsehoods generate embittered
strife,

Whose slanders kill all fair flowers on
our paths.

So wilt thou find fair fruits thy hand hath
raised,

With so much watchfulness and care and
toil,

* Her eldest brother's grave in the private Mausoleum at Odsey.

Plucked, and the fair skins ruthlessly
abraded,
Or cast down on the cold and stony
soil!

Yet—fair and beautiful this world might
be,
Even though some paths are with few
talents gifted,
If there were more of noble souls—like
thee—
With eyes so true—with eyes to Heaven
uplifted!

CHASING A RAINBOW.*

It will not flit as a "marsh-candle" flits,
Nor lead thee into regions, strange and
wild—
As many know, even of the smallest
wits—
'Tis not a thing to *chase*, O foolish
child!

It will illumine even *thy* face, if thou
Wilt stand—*there*—where its glowing
light shall fall—
Paint a soft rose-blush on a pigmy's
brow,
Or fall—and fade—upon a steeple tall!

Oft in the sweetness of Spring's cheerful
days,
When it has rested on some budding
wood,
Have I, in its soft blue, or violet rays,
Transfigured by its wondrous colours,
stood!

Not only near the woods—on meadow
lands
Hath its weird glory fallen upon me,
But I have passed through it on ocean
sands,
And seen it light up vessels, out at sea!

Thou dost but imitate thine elders—
they
Who see a rainbow shine upon their
way—

Nor have the lesson learnt that it shall
fade
To leave them, dull, despairing, in the
shade!

WHAT THEY SAY ONE SAID.

"I WOULD give *anything*"—they say she
sighed—

"To write but poetry!—*then* would I
beat
All who *have* written, and 'upset' their
pride
By verses that were *really* true and
sweet!

"For in *these* days, you see, they write
such *trash*—

Aye! aye! about what is but 'balder-
dash'!—†

Yes! even seek the hearts of men to
move

By foolish legends of that 'myth' called
Love!

"And some write tales, as silly, of 'brave
men'!—

Mere nursery tales are these or little
more:

Far better write of lions in their den,
There is no myth, at least, in *their* deep
roar!

"Yes! *that* we know *is* real! Or write
of those

Who tread, like me, the *pure* paths of
this earth—

And look upon all mankind as but foes,
And call their deeds but deeds of
'feeble' worth!

"Oh! Literature is now in its de-
cline—

Some even vow, indeed, that it is
dead!

Such even look scornfully on paths of
mine!

And after that—there's *nothing to be
said!*"

* NOTE.—These lines were suggested, some time ago, by seeing a boy getting over a stile to cross a field, to "chase" a distant rainbow.

† See p. 435.

A PRETTY GAME!

AS PLAYED BY—SOME!

'Tis a pretty game they play at! each
will flatter up the other!

Now the brother pats the sister—now the
sister pats the brother—

And then they "keep a friend"* to
praise them, and they praise that
friend,

And each, and all, upon the other's ful-
some words depend!

Once—saw we much of this—more than
sufficient for the share

Of one to whom the Flatterer's breath is
poison in the air—

To see what sickly fruits *some* offer and
some will receive,

Transcends the power of wholesome-
minded people to believe!

There is, in truth, no flattery so vulgar,
gross and thick

But some will sup it, as a "dish to set
before a Queen!"

Yes! we but speak the truth in saying
we have turned quite sick

Through the banquets of this kind that
we have heard of and have seen!

And we declare we'd rather be a tramp
upon our roads,

With hardly enough raiment to keep out
the passing breeze,

We'd rather pass our days within the
poorest of abodes,

Than by the vulgar side of such de-
graded souls as these!

There are few things more hurtful than
this "game"—if played it be

In payment for the past, or for the
"better things" to come—

'Tis always—now—it always was, a loath-
some thing to see,

And one that shall not welcome find
within *our* simple home!

NO!—"NOT IF I DIE FOR IT!"

WHAT! live amongst the Pharisees! —
"the pest of olden days"!—

Who still, as in a long-past world, *infest*
our modern ways—

Whose skin seems always smooth, as is
the best-kept household cat,
But whose sharp claws are somewhere "in
the velvet," for all that!

No! "not if I die for it!"

What! live amongst the Pharisees!—and
eat their bread and meat,
And listen to their words of counsel, out-
wardly so sweet!—

The hypocrites!—who teach this is a world
of sin and shame,

And that *they* only, to the next, can carry
a "pure" name!

No! "not if I die for it!"

What! live amongst the Pharisees!—to
find you must not cease

To praise their very vices, would you live
with them in peace?

Yes! know that, would you minister to
their delight and pleasure,

Your duty is to load them with choice
flattery without measure!

No! "not if I die for it!"

What! live amongst the Pharisees!—the
holy and the meek—

Who but of their *own* goodness and their
brothers' sins can speak!—

Who each, the while thy paths are
prosperous, gladly seems thy friend—

But turns his back when "cakes and
ale" are coming to an end!

No! "not if I die for it!"

Far rather would I dwell within the very
meanest cot,

That a peasant may have built in some
most rude, deserted spot,

Where winds are rough, or cold, but with
a sweetness in their breath,

Than with those "pious spirits" who
more hurtful are than Death!

A MEAN SOUL.

AYE! a mean soul was she—one of that
sort

Who creep into a household, don't you
know—

And stick upon it, henceforth, as a *wart*,
That into a huge size, in time, will
grow!

* We "keep a poet"—said an aspiring lady once, whose ambition was still higher. These, more modest
"keep a Flatterer"!

By studying well that household's inmates
—most

Through a mean "worship," did she
keep her place—

Thus as "head flatterer" she kept her
post,

Nor thought she that position a dis-
grace!

Thus learnt she their small histories—the
tales

Of those—"the vile!"—who their pet
follies knew—

And she was of the sort that never
failes

To see what good to *her* might thence
accrue!

So—wormed she out their secrets, hearing
strange,

Distorted legends of whom most they
hated,—

Her fancy also gave them no small range,
While through odd regions were they
circulated!

Such *do* delight to hear some spiteful
thing!—

And with much skill and caution then
to bruit it

In households that receive it as a sting,
Yet have no weapons wherewith to
dispute it!

Aye! Truth is sometimes absent—knowing
not

What liberties are taken with her—when
She is employed upon some distant spot,
Cleansing the dwellings of Earth's viler
men!!

QUITE AN OLD STORY!

'Tis true that mighty little did *we* care
For all the insults heaped upon us
once—

Involved and often novel as unfair—
Now "sprung" by either some mean
knave, or dunce!

Though knowing that, if many reached
our ear,

There must be many we should ne'er
be told—

Withheld sometimes from shame and now
from fear—

A tale unpleasant—dreary—dull and
old!

Quite an old story!—but we know right
well

That "history" repeats itself — and
still

Do certain souls "infernal" legends
tell—

Do certain souls rejoice in doing ill!

But still it *is* a pretty story—*rather!*

The love the spiteful have of throwing
stones,

E'en all the very sharpest they can gather,
Nor care to wait to hear the sufferer's
groans!

There be those that will pass on—"fancy
free"—

Though Hate, *or* Love, their arrows at
them aim—

And there are doubtless some, if few
there be,

That Slander finds have a heaven-
guarded name!

SMALL-BEER CHRONICLES!—I.

OH! the Small-Beer Chronicles! — the
trivial things

Our lesser authors seem to *love* to
write!

About the flutter of their insect wings,
When leaving home to soar into the
Light!

Oh! the Small-Beer Chronicles!—the tiny
lives

That crowd the great ones almost out of
space,

The tales of little husbands — little
wives,

Their small successes—failures—in the
race!

Oh! the Small-Beer Chronicles!—kept by
mean pen,

Or pencil—that some hangers-on will
scribble —

Detailing every doing of mean men,
Or women — truly little more than
dribble!

Are there no *great* things left—still worth
a word?

No work that hath been done of sterling
worth—

No lofty actions that deserve record,
To thereby benefit *all* sorts, on earth?

Are there *no* kindly and unselfish deeds,
That have been but too slightly
passed o'er—

That one needs gather and preserve the
seeds

Of all the meaner rubbish of Life's
store?

SMALL-BEER CHRONICLES!—II.

UNTO small minds seem little things more
great

Than oft a cause that earth's whole
surface moves—

Affairs to *them* seem of tremendous
weight,

If slightly out of their own common
grooves!

Seems not a garden plot, to little eyes
The whole wide, mighty world?—To
a small ant

It is an atmosphere of boundless skies;
A weed's a wood to worms *within*
the plant!

A ripple on the sea, to a sea snail
Is as a mighty storm that fills with fear;
A well-grown sprat appeareth as a whale
Amidst its kind, with nothing larger
near!

To justly estimate Life's trivial things
Is not too easy to a narrow mind—
Such call it "quivering of an Angel's
wings"
If some small fire-fly flutters through the
wind!

So be it!—our philosophers but smile
To see each little insect have its day—

It flutters and flutters—for one little while—
Then falls to cold, indifferent death a
prey!

BEHOLD! THE "EVER- JOYFUL!"—I.

"Through dewy ferns . . . by mantled pools . .
the placid Pecksniff strolled . . . The worthy
Pecksniff walked . . . carolling as he went .
so sweetly . . ."—*Martin Chuzzlewit.*

YES—there are some who go about pro-
claiming

That *they* are always cheerful—calm—
and so on!

And by this plan their fellow-creatures
shaming—

Who may *not* sing about the path *they*
go on!!

The good, alone, such hold, are happy
—they

Of whose whole life the course has been
so sweet!—

For those upon whose consciences can
weigh

No sin, must needs walk earth with
cheerful feet!

They are not melancholy—surely not—
As needs be all their sisters—all their
brothers—

To them alone belongs the "cheerful"
lot—

Grief—sin and misery is for all "those
others!"

"Sweetness and Light" upon their brows
is written,

Surrounded by a "pure" and holy
glow—

Not into their most saintly soul is *bitten*
That deadly sin—self-righteousness—oh
no!

Why should they sorrow—they who ne'er
do wrong—

Whose souls are cleaner than a house-
maid's glass!

'Tis theirs, alone, to sing a "cheerful"
song,

That all the world shall envy—as they
pass!

BEHOLD! THE "EVER-
JOYFUL!"—II.;

OR,

A CHEERFUL MARCH.

(*Air*—"Merry, merry men are we.")

"Oh! sing a cheerful song—a cheerful song!

We—who are so removed from sin and wrong

May well chaunt, loudly, hymns of grateful praise,

As we go forth upon our holy ways!

Oh! sing a cheerful song — a cheerful song!

"Oh! sing a cheerful song—a cheerful song!

While sweetly, peacefully we dance along—

As did the merry "Quaker's wife" of old—

A pretty tale that can't too oft be told!

Oh! sing a cheerful song — a cheerful song!

"Oh! sing a cheerful song—a cheerful song!

Our souls are saintly and *our*-hearts are strong—

It is a vile, a wicked world: but then

We live a life *apart*—from sinful men!

Oh! sing a cheerful song — a cheerful song!

"Oh! sing a cheerful song—a cheerful song!

The sinners round the thrones of Earth still throng—

Their eyes are fixed upon a lurid light

They gather evil fruits and flowers that blight!

Oh! sing a cheerful song — a cheerful song!

"Oh! sing a cheerful song—a cheerful song!

None that are evil to *our* paths belong—

We are the holy ones of earth, no doubt—

All others are the—*rabble and the rout*!

Oh! sing a cheerful song — a cheerful song!"

Left—"Marching on"!

"EAT, DRINK AND

BE MERRY, FOR TO-MORROW

WE DIE!"—I. *

YES! there *are* "cheerful-minded" souls, we know,—

And we *don't* want their "good spirits" to destroy,

Only it seems—these "cheerful" ones are *now*

In seeing if *others* shall have cause for joy!

They appear to think that *their* cheerfulness just means,

As they are the "godly ones" they *need* be glad!

And they talk and they laugh in the midst of Life's sad scenes,

As if 'tis a sinner, only, need be sad!

But they are of those who only of self shall think—

If the bright sun shines on their own poor, common way—

If they have sufficient—*they!*—to eat and drink,

The sorrows of others shall not cloud *their* day!

Yet—*Heaven* has grieved for the world that He had made—

That it is so darkened by the cloud of sin—

That Charity shall be often here betrayed—

And that in the race so often wrong shall win!

"Eat—drink and be merry"—let thy heart not bleed

O'er another's grief, but dance on his broken pride—

Think little, oh! little, of another's need,

So that all thine own mean wants shall be supplied!

* NOTE.—We are "cheerful-minded people," is the common, even vulgar cry of those whose creed is that "cheerfulness" implies "goodness," and that—"damned are they that mourn"—the word "blessed" having been an "interpolation"! !

"EAT, DRINK AND BE
MERRY—FOR TO-MORROW
WE DIE"—II.

"It is true that battles often 'shake the earth'—

That the dead and the dying cumber
much the ground—

And yet shall our 'cheerful' voices ring
with mirth,

While the fruits of the earth upon *our*
lands abound!"

There are thousands of sad ones on earth's
distant shores,

Some die on the land, some die on the
stormy seas,

Or they die—far worse, of the soul's un-
healthy sores—

Or they die by the sudden clutch of
fierce disease.

Grim vice, gaunt misery, stalk through
many a street

Of the world's great cities, crowded on
her land—

And the cries of want no ears of com-
passion meet,

And each man's hand is against his
brother's hand.

And the angel souls above shed many a tear,
As they watch us—as we yet believe—

—on high,

But alas! and alas! there are many weep
not here,

But sing—"eat—drink and be merry
—for to-morrow we die!"

What is it to them—if their own vine
beareth grapes,

That another's shall bear but thorns?—
they suffer not!

So that he from his brother's dreary lot
escapes

Let him fret not *overmuch* for "that
other's" lot!

DAME GOLIGHTLY.

THAT "boast of cheerfulness" is one
pour rire!

That *show*—of being in a "blessed
way!!"

Have they *lost* any that to them were
dear?

Could Echo answer, she would answer
—*Nay!*

Doth not the butterfly and bird flit by
Now sipping flowers, now singing from
the trees—

Eat! drink! be merry!—Who knows when
we die!

This is the happy creed of such as
these!

"Blessed are they that laugh!"—that only
think

How best to make the passing hours
go brightly—

What though they stand upon Perdition's
brink!

Was there not once a Dame—called
Dame Golightly?

Did not the Greeks of old live in this
wise?—

A glad, light-hearted race—as all have
read—

They laughed whene'er the sun was in
their skies—

Sang with the living—wept not for the
dead!

A "short life and a merry one"—again
Hear we!—and from a land not far
away

Come echoes of a seeming cheerful
strain—

Soit!—trouble comes to-morrow—laugh
to-day!

ANOTHER VIEW;

OR,

AN OLD ECHO OF "DOTH
PROTEST TOO MUCH!"

AYE! aye! what wolf is gnawing at their
hearts

Do they but "cry so loud" to hide their
smarts?

Wherefore *protest* so shrilly, on their
way,

What happy, cheerful-minded souls are
they?

They do "protest too much" methinks!
—no one

Need cry "the sun shines" on whom
shines that sun!

He who a fair crown wears will shamble
not

About the world, proclaiming his bright
lot!

Some show by "cheerful noise" a want
of heart,

A cold indifference to all others' cares—
A shrinking back from bearing their own
part,

And with no thought save for their own
affairs!

And some who "boast of cheerfulness"
have never

Walked in the pathways of the strong,
nor know—

Those links of love that death alone can
sever

They ken not either of their bliss or
woe!

Think not that Heaven shines in those
selfish eyes,

Because they cannot sorrow, or repent
Of many false steps, evil or unwise,

But ever on their own mean joys are
bent!

Aye! aye! what wolf is gnawing at their
hearts,

That they do "cry so loud" to hide
their smarts?

Wherefore *protest* so shrilly, on their way,
What happy, cheerful-minded souls are
they?

WITHOUT COMPREHENSION OF TRUTH AND HONOUR.

Oh! the strange tales one hears some
people tell—

As though they didn't believe in anything
like Hell!—

As though the utterance of the basest
lies

Was a thing should *no* one startle, nor
surprise!

Oh! the brazen impudence, or strangeness
of it!—

But there is a point from which they may
take profit—

Perhaps they really do, at last, *themselves*
deceive,

And quite in the truth of their own lies
believe!

'Tis a puzzle always, how to clear their
eyes,

Seeing they are not bright, or over-
wise;

They will contradict you to your very face,
Nor seem to esteem their rudeness a
disgrace!!

You may speak in good faith of your *own*
affairs,

Of your *own* past troubles, or your present
cares—

They imply that you speak but falsehoods,
just to please,

For you make no mark upon such souls
as these.

They contradict your facts with the
greatest "brass"—

To make you out a fool, or knave, or
ass!

We declare that we nothing here exag-
gerate,

Nor in *any* way the matter overstate!

For they have no Honour—nor in heart,
nor hand,

Nor head!—'tis a thing they cannot
understand—

'Tis to them as "Sanskrit" — nay! 'tis
more than this—

For they would betray their Saviour with a
kiss!

UTILITY OF THE TIDE!

OR,

NEW PRACTICES LAID DOWN, FOR
MODERN AND MODEST ENGLISH
MAIDENHOOD!

(See page 607.)

"FLY not—O modest maiden—from the
tide—

Lest its advances might be just *too*
rough—

Lest it should rush up swiftly to thy side,
Nor think to touch thy feet is *rude*
enough!

"Aye! it might even lift thee from those
feet!

And cut off mercilessly thy retreat!—
Then you—divided thus from all the rest,
Might be borne off, and lost, upon its
breast!

"Yet—watch it without fear, perchance
with joy—

Your object is—to 'catch it!'—'there's
the rub!'—

And you *may* 'catch it!'—even though it
be coy!—

And find, perchance, you're borne to
'Beelzebub!'

"Still—as to that—be you not *too* inquir-
ing!

You should not be *o'er*-curious on this
point!

But rather prove that you are bold!—
aspiring!—

Or—you'll soon find that Time is 'out
of joint!'

"Talk of fine feelings and of blushes—
Lor!

You speak of what is 'really but —
'flam-bam!'

And don't say that we're too adventurous
—for

In these days Delicacy is but a *SHAM!*"

OH! DID YOU EVER!

To "catch the tide" and angle for a
lover,

As one would angle for a fish, you
know!

All modesty in *this* way to throw over,
Vexed, if waves *won't* in your direction
flow!

And looking for *such* fish! Oh! did you
ever

Hear *such* a lesson preached!—to Ann,
or Polly,

Or to timid Amelia—no! *never*—

These *do* seem days of something more
than folly!

To watch for lovers—to look out—way-
lay!—

Frightened to firs lest you the prize
should lose!

Nor, haply, *land* your "fish," as you
would say—

Poor fish!—I shouldn't like to be in
his shoes!

What is the being, angling? — *not* a
girl!—

But that 'tis an *old maid* you need not
doubt—

Nor elderly alone—for ne'er a pearl
Of beauty—she! — one whom would
Venus flout!

Girls need not hide in convents—neither
blush

To see a *man!*—and at the sight to rush
As from the tide. Still—*good* girls, do
not you

Follow to *catch* the tide — whate'er you
do—

As "old ones" may—but modest keep,
and sweet—

And you will then find lovers at your feet!

CATCH THE TIDE!*

(See page 607.)

WHEN we hear women bade to sharply
watch

By "Matrimony's sea" — the "tide to
catch!"

When they are told that Love is nothing
more

Than so much "balderdash"—how *can*
we wonder

Young souls are lost upon an evil shore—
And that they listen not to hear the

thunder

Of Heaven that rolleth sternly overhead,
As warning of the evil paths they tread!

They who do evil theories promulgate
Are enemies of Heaven—of Nature;
they

Do "pave" that path that leadeth to the
gate

Of Hell and fill with pilgrims the broad
way—

So marvel not to see the evil light
Now often lighting *modern* earthly eyes,

* Suggested by certain evil records of 1886.

Nor yet to note the ruin and the blight
Of many roses grown beneath our
skies!

The evil seed, so long, so freely sown,
By many a thoughtless, if not reckless
hand,

Falls not alone on paths of weeds and
stone,

But oft, alas! on fair and sunny land!
And curses—even as “chickens *will* come
home

To roost”—but they have spoiled much
good corn first!

What once was smiling under heaven’s
fair dome,

Touched by *some* winds will henceforth
be accursed!

OF L'ENFANT TERRIBLE!

THE Devil chose, one summer’s day,
To take his best and calmest way,
When, walking with the softest feet,
A Pharisee he chanced to meet!

The Pharisee doffed not his hat,
He scarce so humble felt as *that*,
But gave the Devil quite a sly
Wink of a *not* respectful eye!

The Devil did not quite forget
His manners— of the Gentry, he!—
So cried—“Hail—fellow, and well met!
'Tis pleasant you abroad to see!”

The Pharisee said—“How d’ye do!
Pray don’t for slovenliness abuse me,
I’m walking with *so* old a shoe—
For none fit better—*do* excuse me!”

The Devil laughed—and said—said he—
“Friend! I have not the *slightest*
pride—

But 'tis not well the world should see
That we are walking—side by side!

“One must not quite forget — ‘those
others’

Do dearly love to spoil our race—
We must not seem, *mon cher*, as brothers,
The world is a censorious place!”

Yet, though the “other side” he took—
The Devil’s friend an anxious look
Cast round him, to observe how near
Seemed each to each, in his career!

And who shall tell where *then* they went?
There *is* a path of steep descent—
But whether they that way *did* go
None like to tell, if even they know!

'Tis more than probable!—but still
Give them the benefit, you know,
Of just a doubt—it would be ill
To say “*both* found their homes below!”

OF L'ENFANT TERRIBLE!

(Whom we were accused of daring to “take to task!”)

“I WON’T be ‘taken to task’—no! no! I
won’t—

And I *will* do as I like, and cry and
scold—

And I don’t want to be *better* made—I
don’t—

And I *will* not do ‘good things’ be-
cause I’m told!

‘Boo-hoo! Boo-hoo!’

“No! no! I *won’t* be ‘taken to task,’ I
say—

By one of the creatures that I heard
nurse call

Such ‘feeble and ignorant’ people—’tis
not they

That shall *dare* bid me to hush when-
e’er I *bawl*!—

‘Boo-hoo! Boo-hoo!’

“If ‘she’ *tries* to quiet me won’t I just
scratch her!—

And if she orders me my room to keep,
Wouldn’t I ‘rampage’ and kick—if I
could catch her,

And take good care *she* had no rest,
nor sleep!

‘Boo-hoo! Boo-hoo!’

“And they shall *not* my dirty features
wash—

And if they dare use towels or soap—on
me—

Ha! ha! see if I *then* don't make a splash,
Such as *some* friends of mine will laugh
to see!

'Boo-hoo! Boo-hoo!'

"For I *won't* be 'taken to task'—no!
no! I *won't*—

And I *will* do as I like, and cry and
scold—

And I *don't* want to be better made—I
don't—

And I *will* not do 'good things' be-
cause I'm told!

'Boo-hoo! Boo-hoo!'"

CRABBED AGE!

WHERE hast thou lived—thou poor old
soul,

Oh! where hast thou lived, we pray—
Surely in some dark, airless hole,
Unknown to the light of day!

What is the age that marks thy brow—
Is't a hundred years or more?

For thy youth thou dost forget, we trow,
And its echoes all are o'er!

Not *here* is the wisdom of old years—
In which shall the sage rejoice—

Here is but the mark of peevish tears,
And the sound of a fretful voice!

Aye! a dreary life is ever theirs,
Not one, methinks of the sage,
They live to grumble at Earthly cares,
Then depart—as in a rage!

But there is a sweet and gracious age
When the sun goes calmly down—
And one that a war with Time will wage,
Not close, with a hopeless frown!

DEFENCE OF WOMEN.*

"WHAT a droll thought—to think how
furious they
Were made by your defence of us!"
—once said

A gentle mortal, on a certain day,
Lifting with quiet scorn a thoughtful
head!

"*They ought*, if they had good and whole-
some hearts,
And souls unenvious, to have felt *quite*
glad

To see us proved to play far nobler parts
On earth than *they* admitted!—ah! 'tis
sad!—

"Yes! *very* sad to think on minds like
these,
And there are some—alas! too well one
knows—

Who while *they* live in most 'inglorious
ease'

At our *true* toilers aim unworthy
blows!"

Aye! more than this—friend—so do some
declare—

Their state was one of not a *sweet* despair
At being proved to have been in the
wrong,

In uttering condemnation just *too* strong!

Our virtues and our sins were, both alike,
A question of importance, small, —
beside

The question if they had the *right* to
strike!—

This gave the blow to their o'erweening
pride!

A TALE OF A PEN!*

AH yes! *that* pen was dipped, they sighed,
into the blackest ink,

And wrote with strength and plainness
that they did not quite expect!—

But the writer could of truth and could
of honour, only, think,

And so forgot *one* "ignorant woman"
might to this object!

That never "ignorant" women like to
hear their sisters praised

For being *wiser than themselves* one can
imagine *quite*!

No wonder that a storm of indignation
thus was raised—

And what was odder still—they our
defence called only *spite*!!

* Referring to the Authoress's defence of women in "Versus a Woman, Pro Women."

Out of the poorest, nay! out of the
meanest mind alone,
Arises much of jealousy for others'
nobler worth,
Of others' higher stations — sometimes
reaching to the throne,
And touching all that may be, of
superior, on the earth!

Spheres into whose charmed circles never
may their steps intrude,
They judge by the outside, and outsides
sometimes are not *quite*
The patterns of the *insides*—but are even
rough and rude
Like cocoanuts — yet hold contents
sweet, wholesome, fresh, and white.

But all these "subtle" truths, one sees,
are far beyond the brain
Of our glib-speaking "critics," though
such fact they ne'er would own!
To read what lies *below* the surface might
be even a strain
Of all those wondrous powers the poor
fools think theirs, alone!

Yes! yes! that pen was dipped, they
sighed, into the blackest ink,
And wrote with strength and plainness
that they did not quite expect—
But the writer could of truth and could
of honour, only, think,
And so forgot *one* "ignorant woman"
might to this object!

"GANG THINE AIN GAIT!"

To —.

FRIEND! thou wilt rage o'er every book
of ours—
That we have heard—nor can you now
deny,
Unless you fib! — bringing what little
powers
Are thine to *blight* them—underneath
the sky!

Such pretty tales thy "friends" about
thee tell,
Or told of thee—in not a far-off day!—

What "maun be, maun be!"—and *we*
say 'tis well!
So "gang thine ain gait," as would
Sandy say!

Thou'rt fond of Scotch, and 'tis a pretty
tongue—
We always *loved* it, and we would
advise thee
To read their "poets," who have often
sung
About that "Night" whose every
"Watch" so tries thee!*

Thou read'st *us* "too much," friend; for
thy peace!
We would thou might'st this *luxury*
forego—
For then might thine heart's angry throb-
bings cease—
When sitting down by thy fire's friendly
glow!

Consider! it were well to curb thine ire
By turning to thy most "convenient
grate"
And casting all our books into the fire
While vowing thou did'st *never* feel
"irate!"
Then with approving, even *happy* eyes,
Watching each spark until—oh! joy—*it*
dies!

REAL CRITICS!

As for *real* Critics we again may say
What we had need to say before—that
they
Will be upon our side, yet Truth may
need,—
Though not protecting like a feeble reed.

Still—eyes of watchfulness! Too well we
know
One may possess a statue, pure as snow,
That yet may be mud-spotted, by the
vile,
Who, as they look on its defilement—
smile!

* "Would'st thou see fair Melrose aright
Go! visit it by the pale moonlight."

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Yes! one, alas! hath noticed—countless times—

Thus spattered hath Truth been, by hands of those
Who loudly shriek about their fellows' crimes

Yet prove themselves her deadliest of foes!—

Each sharpened stone that they select to fling,

And that to spoil her stainless face is meant,

Seems quite a model of *that* vicious thing
Of which to *damage* is the sole intent!

Thus — if Truth were not adamantine, quite—

Into a myriad chips her form they'd break!—

And if her face were not of marble-white

They soon would change it to a "dirty lake,"

Or any colour that, being *once* fair,
Looks all the viler under such *fond* care!

I WOULD *NOT* HAVE "SNEAKING PATHS" INCREASED!

No! for myself I care not in the least—
But I would *not* have "sneaking paths" increased

In which walks "Incognito," with his brow

Securely veiled—'tis not, methinks, that *now*

Should in our modern England, thus, be told

A tale that is both cowardly and old!

In Parliament, as we have often said,
Men wear no mean disguises—'tis a fight

Men carry on—each with uncovered head,
Held high and firmly in a brilliant light!

To his antagonist he stands revealed—
He hath no dagger—he!—sharp, and concealed!

For—see you not—when men mean things
would do

They act in even an ignominious manner—

They wear a padded or a *carpet* shoe,
And *hidden* keep—not *flourished*, their mean banner—

So carefully one *Pen* conceals its name,
Lest, told—it might but bring itself to shame!

NOT YOUR *FORTE*!

TO — LITTLEWIT, ESQ.

OH! little one—sarcasm's not your *forte*—
You only grow ridiculous—you know!

For *Thalia* quite vainly would you court—
The Greeks would own you not!—but surely show

The *door* to you, if you should be so rude

As dare into their temples to intrude!

Wit never gracious was, all see, to *you*—
And did you in its paths attempt to walk

There would be o'ermuch flapping of a shoe

That ne'er could *fit* you, and would cause much talk

Amongst the "merry ones," — at *impudence*,

Recalling *Bruin*, when he seeks to dance!

Excuse us!—we don't wish to wound your "pride"—

But then you *really do* — most truly — bring

It quite upon yourself: you should decide
To find some other work to do — and sing

The old song with a difference—try it now!

And Peace may shine again upon thy brow!

ON WHAT A CRITIC SAID—

OF

"IN THE WATCHES OF THE NIGHT."

"Calculated to do useful work in the world." *

THOU could'st not offer us more valued praise

Than that—O Critic!—thou dost here bestow!—

* *South London Chronicle and Southwark and Lambeth Ensign*, Dec. 11th, 1886.

If we can be of use, in earthly ways,
 To point out evil and to lighten woe,
 While we would ever strengthen faith in
 God,
 And mark what hath brought down the
 "lightning-rod"—
 Or what fair fields may be by clouds o'er-
 cast,
 Then shall our heart feel satisfied, at last!

Such words as thine are cheery—when we
 hear
 The angry sounds that follow our career,
 The eyes that but with bitter malice shine,
 The voice of rage—the pharisaic whine,
 The scream of those that scoff at Love—
 the sneer
 That notes her gentle smile, her burning
 tear—
 Aye! it is sweet to know that we, as well,
 Of such as thou but kindly tales need tell!

TO A WRITER.

ABOUT THE *Necessity* OF "QUOTING REVIEWS."

THERE'S more than one "sweet, truthful
 soul," my friend,
 About the world, as one must needs
 confess,
 Who, though to Christian virtues they pre-
 tend
 Walk scarce in paths one feels inclined
 to bless!

Have such not spoken, without any
 shame,
 (Save that shown in the hiding of each
 name),
 O' th' "condemnation" of our Critics—
 these
 Are "Things" who falsehoods tell with
 "fatal ease!"

There are *some* who think that untruth is
 a sin!—
 And who know not the tricks of a poor
 class
 Who love to cry the "melon's bruised
 skin,"
 And now will play the knave and now
 the ass!

Aye! such as even our title call
 "affected"—
 Who cannot even our "cover" leave
 alone!—
 These surely must not be, my friend,
 neglected,
 But places find that shall be all their
 own!

Thus, in defence—against them—do we
 note
 The kindly praises we so oft receive—
 It is for Truth's protection that we
 "quote!"
 Lest some in "interested knaves" be-
 lieve!

CERTAIN "FEEBLE" SOULS!

THEY seemed to think it needs must
 make you vain
 Did you the very smallest triumph gain!
 It may be *they* had been so in *your* place,
 They—who ran ever such a tiny race!

What no temptation was to you, to them
 Seemed *huge* indeed, and so, no doubt,
had been!
 The feeblest streams they had no power
 to stem,
 And in experience they were sadly—
green!

They were no judge of character—not they!
 They blamed the strong—while weak-
 ness they would flatter—
 Because they could not walk a nobler way
 They seemed to hold that way an evil
 matter!!

They could not learn that what o'er-
 powered *their* sight,
 And made *them* stagger into untried
 ways,
 As though it were *too* dazzling in its light,
 To *you* might be a rush-light's little
 rays!

They were the feeblest souls one ever
 met,
 And yet puffed up indeed by huge
 conceit—
 Although they ever seemed to strangely
 fret
 Because men heard no echo of their
 feet!

ABOUT THE OFFENSIVE VANITY
OF A *ONCE* OLD MAID!

A *QUEER* old maid — most *singularly*
plain—
Yet scarce, one learnt, less *singularly*
vain!—
She and her *idiotic* friends, had thought
From Heaven (?) she had our Saviour's
features caught!

Yes! dreamt that on that *common* brow
did shine
A light far more than glorious!—'twas
divine!
While something holy lit the pale, blue
eyes,
Whose gaze did somewhat, to speak truth,
surprise!

Yes! her *mean* face did they to Christ's
compare!
It matters not, if it were dark, or fair—
For as to Christ's the Learned are
divided—
So we must leave *that* point *quite* un-
decided!

But *such* a mouth!—Oh! monstrous!—even
to think
That *any*—even “unorthodox,” as these,
Should not from *this* comparison quite
shrink!—
Nay! but they used it with a fatal
ease!

You think this incident I dreamt! not I!
For with contempt and loathing one stood
by—
And heard this ghastly flattery, without
fear

Of a disclaimer—(which it did not meet!;
Poured, as it seemed, into a willing ear!
Truly a hideous instance of conceit!

HOW TO USE FICTION TO
SUPPORT THEORY.

DRAW first a daughter-in-law, so *very*
good
That she hath of meekness an unfailling
store!

Next—a mother-in-law, who, be it under-
stood,
Hath only her “prejudices”—nothing
more!

Let the daughter-in-law *adore* the mother-
in-law,
Neither for rhyme, nor reason—even
though she
Hath shown in her character many a *little*
flaw,—
And *even* an obstinate trait, that all could
see!

And next—for a reason none can compre-
hend,
Make the mother-in-law to all an angel
seem—
A *genuine* mother, comforter, and friend—
Like a saintly creature, in a *holy*
dream!

Let the husband take the *second* place, the
while—
Let him keep accounts—or work—or
fight—or paint!—
Or, just as a change, make him a creature
vile,
Quite a contrast to his mother-in-law—
that saint!—

O Fiction!—thou an idiot art at times,
And thy wiser readers may not always
please—
Thou wilt sometimes deal with a Braddon's
thrilling crimes,
And then with the feeblest incidents!—
like these!

OH! KNOW YOU NOT?

Oh! know you not earth breeds a “special
class”
Of “Christian-minded” women —
“pious” men
Who try their best for “holy ones” to
pass
And who do “set their mouths” so
meekly, when
They walk in daylight, long-fingered
gloves—
For each one dearly “outward-seeming”
loves!

Offend their vanity, and the set smile
 Upon each face at *once* will disappear—
 As far as *you* may be concerned!—mean-
 while

One notes the angry frown *or*—angry
 tear!—

And *even* the scarce charitable word
 By those that care to listen may be heard!

Ye “Christian souls!”—to use again a
 phrase

That ye *adore*—in going on your ways
 We sometimes hear ye, with much *unction*,
 cry

“Truly the sins of earth must make one
 sigh!—

If all could only grow like us!”—Alas!
 Earth still produces many a braying ass!

TO A FEMININE GRUMBLER.

GOOD woman—ere complaining of another
 ‘Twere well to sweep up cleanly thine
 own hearth!—

Ere grumbling at a sister, or a brother,
 To walk thyself a somewhat nobler path!

Aye! ye who love to boast ye are so “pure”
 (Heaven save the mark!) and free from
 every fault,

At least that monstrous vanity might cure
 That seems its very self to overvault.

Thou hast, we fear, a cold and selfish
 heart,

Of thine own insignificance art proud!
 Thy soul can rise to play no noble part
 While covered by so poor and cold a
 cloud!

A tale more sweet might even of thee be
 told

If thou would’st rub off from thy mind
 its rust—

If thou would’st flog thyself like monks of
 old,

Aye! humble thyself almost to the dust.

Yet be not “umble”—*like* Uriah Heep!—
 Though this, perchance, on *thee*, we need
 not urge—

Advice like this, methinks, full well might
keep,

Until thou from the darkness may’st
 emerge!

Aye! you “good woman”—ere you of
 another

Do grumble, sweep up cleanly thine own
 hearth—

Ere thou dost scold a sister, or a brother,
 See that *thou* walkest a more noble path!

THE SELFISH WAY.

GOD’S unbeloved, truly, here—were they—
 Treading a selfish and protected way—

Living in safety by their well-warmed
 hearths,

And fleeing all brave wars of others’ paths.

All shades of suffering did they abhor,
 For Nature gave to each so small a
 heart

No sorrow could they bear with patience,
 nor

Chose in the griefs of others to bear
 part.

Aye! aye! such sigh not o’er their fellows’
 woes—

If e’er they wept ‘twas for themselves
 they wept;

To them unknown the heart’s more
 generous throes,

So—silent—*Trouble* from their presence
 crept!

Days uneventful theirs!—hours they might
 spend

Upon themselves, or on some *flattering*
 friend!

Whilst full exemption from the storms and
 shade

Of earth they prayed for—if they ever
 prayed!

For they no “living faith,” in truth, pro-
 fessed,

In aught that was not of mere earthly
 type—

Their souls were by no “creed of old”
 possessed,

They had their *own* “views,” both of
 wrong and right!

GOD’S unbeloved, truly, here—were they,
 Treading a selfish and protected way—

Living in safety by their well-warmed
 hearths,

And fleeing the brave wars of others’ paths!

QUITE THE "SPECIAL-CHRISTIAN" WAY!

WHILE their own paths they sweetly contemplated,
 Declaring that none others were so
 "pure,"
 The steps of others bitterly they *rated*,—
 And with a *squint* that nothing seemed
 to cure
 They looked on all things of "the
 World's"—for they
 Took quite, you see, the "special-
 Christian-way!"

And one knows many—not, alas! a few—
 Who ne'er to their own danger seem
 awake—
 Who cherish with tenacity the view—
 That all an evil path are doomed to
 take,
 Or rather obstinately *choose* it, save
 Themselves—earth's saintly—stainless—
 pure and brave!

Who is "with them" must, they maintain,
 be blessed!—
 If not—in "outer darkness" shall he
 dwell!
 Who is "with them" shall know both
 peace and rest—
 Perchance hear, never, echo of a knell!
 A wondrous spot—*they* claim—of magic
 ground—
 Meanwhile one wonders where such spot
 is found!
 And who the angels are—the souls of white,
 That therein dwell—in all-celestial light!

TO —.

GIFTS that are gracious thou may'st leave
 unnamed—
 Bread on the waters find, in after days—
 But to stab in the darkness be ashamed!
 Amend—my timid friend, the coward's
 ways!

Thou would'st do better did'st thou do as
 we!!
 And let all those who pass, thy features
 see;

Come out—once more—that half-seen face
 unveil
 That none of thee may whisper a mean
 tale!

All stabbing in the dark we once again
 Bid thee abjure upon earth's modern
 plain—
 Do fearlessly what thou think'st well—
 although
 A pigmy should at *giants* strike a blow!

For this poor warring in the darkness all
 Shall by a term of obloquy now call—
 And — till the veil is from thy features
 torn,
 Shall all regard thee with the brave soul's
 scorn!

For thou may'st leave a *gracious* gift un-
 named—
 Bread on the waters find, in after
 days—
 But to stab in the darkness be ashamed!
 Amend, my timid friend, the coward's
 ways!

CAREERS OF SELFISHNESS.

YES! they all went the way they made
 their own,
 Trampling the flower yet killing not the
 weed;
 They thought of saving their own souls
 alone,
 Nor cared what hearts of young or old
 might bleed.

They took the characters away of all
 Who differed from them or who "did
 them wrong!"
 They said they—only—had a "holy call,"
 And on *that* point, at least, their faith
 was strong.

'Twas a convenient creed—that made them
 shirk
 All the great difficulties of earth's
 paths—
 And left to others to do all the work,
 While they—protected—sat beside their
 hearths!

Ah, yes! quite of the "saintly sort" were they—

They had a horror, they declared, of sin!

They trod the perfect, and the *only* way,
Therefore were certain heavenly realms to win!

Oh! but even plants of value shall decay
In such an evil soil as this, at last—

They cannot bear the heat of summer's day,

And shrivel at the first, keen, wintry blast!

"PROTESTS TOO MUCH!"

"PROTESTS too much!"—beware of these
—of all

Who chance beneath thy scrutiny to fall,
O student of mankind!—if not accursed
These are of feeble souls almost the worst!

"Protests too much!"—if thou a person meetest

Who prates of all the sinners he hath known,
Whose view of human souls is not the sweetest,
Question!—if he in virtue stands alone?

Aye! ask if others have right vilely used him,

And through mere malice branded him with fire!

Or if ill-fortune only hath abused him,
Or—his own follies dragged him through the mire?

Oft shall you find such will "too much" protest

Concerning human nature's faulty paths,
Figuring themselves as of the "highest-best,"

While certain vipers coil beside their hearths!

Too much, alas! of meanness, of deceit,
Is often hidden between painted walls,
And where, o'er the rich carpet at thy feet,

The Pharisee's unpleasant shadow falls.

BETWEEN THE HEMLOCK AND THE STONE!

OH! fear not—Satan!—but that men will wage

Thy wars on earth in every clime and age!
The seeds by thee so *beautifully* sown
Spring up between the hemlock and the stone!

Fear not—O Satan! that thy reign is past,

Despite what men believe of angel-tears!
Thy cloth of sin for ever seems to last,
Nor fades its colour through a million years!

The world may be no longer young, yet we

Know "History repeats itself"—aye! still!

What *we* have been *that* may our children be,

Now lost through weakness, now through stains of ill.

Self-righteousness is ever of *thy* crowd,
And seats herself upon thy warmest hearth—

O Satan! many of the vain and proud
Find, with unerring instinct, thy broad path!

Aye! these the steps that hasten on thy way,

The Pharisee, forgetting not to pray,
Or to cross meekly his fat hands, will yet
Bring countless souls, O Satan! to thy net!

THE DEPARTING SUN.

(AN OCTOBER SUNSET.)

So! "every inch a King" he goes to rest,
Throwing his last smile o'er the deep sea waters,

Leaving his mantle on the ocean's breast,
Soon to be gathered up by Night's pale daughters!

A noble mantle of Imperial gold
And purple—one that knoweth no decay,

Nor one that shall be changed, though
cycles, old
Beyond all counting, now have passed
away.

A mantle made "of many colours"—hues
Of brilliancy that dazzle mortal eyes,
One that the hand of Heaven alone re-
news—
And keeps in state for His eternal
skies!

Gone to his rest—we say—and yet not so!
For other lands are for his coming wait-
ing;
To them he brings his never-failing glow—
Not even one ray of warmth and power
abating!

The "East falls down in prayer" before
his face—
The northern skies long for the Monarch
wait—
They are as calm outsiders of his race,
And know his hour of coming shall be
late!

O PINE-WOODS GREEN!

"O Pine-wood green!—O Pine-wood green!
Thy foliage fadeth never,
Green in the summer heat, and seen
As green in snowy weather.

GERMAN VOLKSLIED.

See *Cornhill Magazine*, Dec., 1886.

O PINE-WOODS green!—dark pine-woods
green,
Never more strange—more weird to me
Than when the hornéd moon is seen
To shine on each mysterious tree.

O pine-woods green!—dark pine-woods
green,
Under whose boughs no bright flowers
bloom;
In whose grim realms strange forms are
seen,
But half-shaped in the ghastly gloom!

Aye! pine-woods green—dark pine-woods
green,
Whose arms the moon's pale face con-
ceal—
The stars peep slyly oft between,
And into thy dark mysteries steal!

Aye! pine-woods green—dark pine-woods
green,
Strange sounds belated wanderers hear
Come from thy *goblin* depths, I ween,
That thrill their very souls with fear!

O pine-woods green!—dark pine-woods
green,
Never more strange—more weird to me
Than when the hornéd moon is seen
To shine on each mysterious tree!

BRAVE HEARTS!

OR,

YOUNG LOCHINVAR AGAIN!

HE bore her away in the dead of the night,
Though her young heart was beating—her
eyes wild with fright;
He bore her away from the home that was
hers,
By the help of strong arms, a brave heart
and sharp spurs!

Oh! soon had they distanced that haughty
abode,
With speed and in silence all swiftly
they rode;
They looked not behind them—they looked
not before,
And the home of their kinsman soon knew
them no more!

Ere long they had paused by the sea's
spreading sand,
Ere long they had sailed to a far distant
land;
And the hearts that had broken, if severed
in twain,
Grew happy and bright in the sunshine
again!

For those that oppose it will live but to
rue
The love that is honest, the love that is
true;
Oh! it bares its firm brow to the storm's
rudest shocks—
It will break through all cords and unfasten
all locks!

Yes! Love brings us trouble, but Love
brings us joy—
And Love that is faithful no hands shall
destroy—

For Love and contentment will aye go to-
gether,
And Love that is faithful can *all* tempests
weather!

Through sorrow and trouble they bear well
their part—
Firm hand holding hand and warm heart
true to heart;
And the tempests of morn and of noon
pass away,
And leave them in peace at the close of
the day!

WOLFINE—THE AVENGER!

(Date about 1846.)

A MYSTERY "ALL OF THE OLDEN TIMES!"

Not even from spectre — clothed in
white—

From ghastly, supernatural sight—
Not even at wild, mysterious sound,
Heard in dark caverns—underground!

Had mortals with more terror started,
Than when from Wolfine's side they
parted!

So—with fierce, kindling eyes, alone
Stood Wolfine—right before the throne!

See the Avenger! for, at length
He stands before thee, with the strength
Of thousands—nay! as myriads strong—
To help the weak—avenge the wrong!

Thy hour of Death hath come at last!
Thy hour for pity long hath passed—
Thou hast not given to *others* time
To pray for pardon—grace—for crime!

And many stalwart hast thou worn
To shadows, with thy hate and scorn,
And many hath thine hand laid low,
Far nobler than thyself, *I* know!

Then came a tumult—fierce and loud—
A savage shout—a flying crowd—
They turned again—and yet again—
Then fled, and all pursuit was vain!

Soon not a voice, and scarce a breath,
Disturbed the gloomy field of Death;
Not even the vulture's savage croak
Through the dull, heavy vapours broke!

Until o'er that grim battle plain,
Was heard to pass a plaintive strain,
That grew in volume and in power,
With the slow deepening of the hour—

"Rejoice! rejoice! ye shadowy dead—
Lift each of ye a ghastly head!
Raise each of ye a bloodstained hand—
Rise up—a strong, if phantom band!"

And then pealed forth the trumpet's blare,
And filled with sound the awe-struck air,
Even as a mighty roll of thunder—
And all who heard it, stared with wonder.

Then gloomy night gave slowly way—
Slowly and sadly—for the day—
As though her footsteps only crept
Through cold and ghostly mists that
wept!

Then less and less the darkness grew,
To flowers all weighted with their dew,
To slowly-bending forest trees—
Whose moaning woke the chilly breeze!

And fairy steps that lately trod,
With fairy impudence, the sod,
On butter-cups, or sweet hare-bells,
Now fled away to darker cells.

Far distant—o'er the forest—rose
A noble mountain—crowned with snows—
And towering far above the rest!
For—truly—'twas Benhaven's crest!

Even as a queen in pride she stood,
Her dark sides veiled by mystic wood,
And, looking marvellously high,
Her face peered upwards to the sky.

Around was beauty—beauty such
As is not hurt by Time's rude touch,
Nor marred by untaught rule, or plan,
Formed by the foolish mind of man!

Yet one might breathe a poisonous breath,
Exhaled as from the plains of Death,

From banks on which the hemlock grew—
O'er which no bee of wisdom flew!

And yet the branches interwove,
Of eglantine and rose, to boot;
Yet scarcely like the growth of Love,
For all were rotten at the root!

And never, on the wood, or hill,
Was heard the cheery sound of bird,
The woods and fields were voiceless still,
Only the stream was always heard.

And once a Bee went humming by,
Yet seemed to hum against its will!
And, as it flew, a weary sigh
Seemed on the listener's ear to thrill!

Nay! even was heard a heavy groan!
Which *never* hour of morning suits—
That echoed from a tomb of stone,
Where squatted toads and spotted newts!

Where hellebore was green and rank,
Where nettles — each with blist'ring
sting,
Grew tall upon the slimy bank,
And where the gnats were on the wing!
* * * * *

What more there might be to relate
I know not—I!—the hour grew late,
Or—rather—*early*, and the light
Brought with it—philosophic sight!

A TRUE TALE!

(Date about 1846.)

(As far as it goes!)

HE swore he didn't in ghosts believe,
That who declared that he had seen 'em
Did say so only to deceive!

That one or two of such, between 'em,
Had often—so he sternly said,
Upset a young, or timid head!

Yet once I heard—not the beginning,
But middle!—of a strange, wild tale—
Told not while foolish apes were grinning,
But while a tender cheek turned pale!
I understood it not *too* well!
Yet here what I was told will tell:—

"One night—seen dimly in the shade
The tall rocks threw across yon glade—

A form came slowly o'er the green,
Yet threw no shadow that was seen!

"No knightly vizor hid his face—
A mantle half usurped its place—
And startled eyes might note, beneath,
A dagger in a polished sheath!

"And underneath the trees there stood
A lady, veiled by silken hood,
But when she saw that form advance
Her veil she raised—with frenzied glance!

"Then, tossing wild her arms of snow,
So whitely shining, midst her hair,
She spoke, yet spoke in tones too low
To find an echo in the air.

"'Magician!—thou who can'st up-call
The moon, and bid the bright stars fall—
Who things of weirdest weight and might
Foretellest by a meteor's light!

"'O thou! who undisputed power
Hast o'er all things in this wild hour—
Who knowest the dark deed I have done,
And the wild wrongs that led me on—

"'Thou who hast seen what weight of
woe
Falls on the slaves of sin below,
Speak! is there not forgiveness—say!
For one who weeps, but dares not pray!'

"'I am not one whom ye should seek!'
In hollow tones the stranger said—
'Yet must ye listen when I speak,
Who come from dwellings of the dead!

"'Hear, then! I come to tell thee thou
Must leave thine earthly dwelling now,
Thy woods and streams—thy towers tall—
Aye! Lady! even leave them all!

"'And thou shalt go where ne'er may
shine
The sun on that white brow of thine—
Nor music, at the evening's close,
Steal in on Nature's calm repose!

"'Aye! so to lull thy thoughts to peace,
And bid all griefs, awhile, to cease,
And to forget that web of wrong
Thy small hands wove, and *made so*
strong!

"Behold! yon moon is sinking low—
And I to other scenes must go—
Yet—Illa! ere for aye we part,
Look on me—false of hand and heart!"

"His mantle from his face he raised—
That face that looked so dead—so cold!
And Illa gazed and wildly gazed,
For in that moment all was told!

"Aye! well she knew him, though that
brow
Had lost its youth—its smoothness now—
Those brilliant eyes, of days of yore,
Shone with the light of love no more!

"And still she gazed and could not speak!
Aye! still gazed on until her heart
Spoke in one wild and piercing shriek
When soul and body seemed to part!—

"The long and dreary night passed by—
The sun lit up a cloudless sky—
Full joyously it seemed to shine
Upon the heights of Ennistein.

"They sought its mistress in each spot
That she had loved, yet found her not!
They sought her in her lofty tower,
And in her well-loved forest bower.

"Alas! alas! they only found
Her lute lie broken on the ground—
And some fair flowers that she had worn—
That seemed by hands of anger torn!

"Lastly—they sought the Magic Glade!
And there beneath the heavy shade
Of pines she lay—and wet with dew
Those cheeks, of once such glowing hue!

"Aye! diamonds shone in her dark hair—
And pearls upon her bosom fair,
And tears upon her cheek—and yet
Her sun of life, alas! had set!

"And why and wherefore who could tell?
Death guards his dreary secrets well!
She sleeps beneath the churchyard yew—
And none her secret ever knew!"

SUNSET.

Low sinks the sun; through Autumn's
silent woods
Its light is poured, in rich and crimson
floods—

Upon the outlines of yon mountain reach—
Upon the topmost branches of the beech—
And yet its soft and gentle beams caress
The roses that yet village gardens bless,
While still and musing seems each forest
flower,

As though it felt, at evening's tender hour,
The loving gift of silence—of the close
Of weary labours—of the world's repose!
The fitful notes of woodbirds, one by one,
Seem following the departure of the sun,
And, as its glory fades from wood and hill,
Fainter their songs become and fainter
still—

Only the wild bee, humming, wings his
flight
Through roses, nodding in the soft twi-
light!

The watchdog's wary bark still greets the
ear,
As footsteps echo past, or draw more
near—

And winding down the peaceful village
track

Faint footfalls of stray passengers come
back;

And bats flit in and out the woodland
trees—

And leaves flap softly in the dying breeze.
"So come into the woods, my love, and leave
Thy busy cares for some less peaceful eve;
Press the soft mosses with thy feet, and
feel

How sweet it is, at times like these, to
steal

Some respite from the heavy cares that
weigh

So painfully upon the brow by day.
Silence and calm the tired world now have
blessed,

And even the beasts of burden are at rest,
Tumult and turmoil pass into the night:
Rest well—thou weary world,—and now—
Good-night!"

I THINK OF THEE.

A LOVER TO HIS MISTRESS.

I THINK of thee through the long summer
night,

And seem to hear thy lips still breathe
of love,

I look again into thine eyes, whose light
Is sweeter than all starlight from above!

I think of thee when I am far away
From all that might thy too-loved face
recall—

In the rich colour of a tropic day,
Or as the northern chilly shadows fall.

I think of thee amidst the busy crowd,
As in the hours when heaven and earth
are still,

Thy voice so deep, so thrilling — never
loud—

Re-echoes with its well-remembered
thrill.

There is no moment, even of sternest
fate,

In which thou art forgotten!—ever more
Thou wilt be with me—till the hours grow
late,

Till the long waiting of this life is o'er!

But most I think of thee when I am sad,
And when in weariness I pray for
death!

I see thee then in robes of mourning clad,
Thy pale lips parted—parted without
breath!

Aye! still remembered through my long,
sad night!

And still thy pale lips seem to breathe
of love—

I look again into thine eyes—whose light
Is sweeter than all starlight from above!

LOVED AND LOST.

(Dated about 1846.)

THEY bore her slowly from her father's
hall,

She who was once so lovely and so
young;

While snow-white plumes, and heavy sable
pall,

O'er her now dark and narrow home
were hung.

They bore her from each well-loved,
homely scene,

And from a country home, both fair
and grey,

From beechwood forest and from meadow
green,

They bore her, with slow-marching steps,
away.

And then they placed her in her peaceful
tomb,

Upon that couch, so passionless, so cold!
They laid her in the silence and the gloom,
And o'er her heavily they threw the
mould.

And one fair light of evening—one fair
star,

Lit up the eastern sky, with deepening
glow,

As, with a cold indifference, from afar,
It looked down on the darkening earth
below.

The rose of summer blooms above the
grave,

Where there is darkness that shall never
lighten—

Fair flowers of scent and beauty gaily
wave,

Nor know of the foul charnelhouse they
brighten.

Almost as yesterday—they sadly thought—
Her life was one with joy and pleasure
fraught,

Her steps were light as the gazelle's, and
now

Death-stains are on her pure and sinless
brow!

Yes! as Spring's tender leaf, when winds
sweep o'er it,

Falls to the ground yet leaves the branch
that bore it,

Death gathered her in her yet early bloom,
And laid her, in the darkness—in the
tomb!

"Ah! leave the withered roses on her
bier—

O Life! O Love! my last sweet hope lies
here—

I know I call thee back, beloved, in vain—
Thou can'st not brighten my sad life
again!"

LOVE AND DEATH.

I.

"Tis the fairest hour of our fair earth,
When soft, grey light in her bowers of
mirth,

As the summer's sun is slow descending,
With its rich and brilliant gold is blending.

"For the turmoil of the world is o'er,
And the voice of Life is loud no more,
But fairer that hour when shared with thee—

Then come to the greenwood, love, with me!

"Oh! come to the forest's massive shades,
Where the deer sport lightly in mossy glades—

And where, as the daylight groweth dim,
The thrush sings softly his evening hymn!

"And nothing soon but the moan is heard
Of the forest boughs by a faint breeze stirred,

And the soul is awed by the want of sound,
By the solemn hush of the gloom around.

"Yes, come!—there are few who wander now—

The earth is peaceful—the world is still—
The wild bird slumbers upon the bough—
The fleet stag rests on the purple hill;

"But see!—there are two that linger yet
To watch the light of the red sunset—
And their brows are young—and their brows are fair,
Untroubled yet by the touch of care!

"The sound of their laugh is low and sweet,
And tender the smile when dark eyes meet,

As the twilight groweth dense and deep,
And the life of earth is wrapt in sleep.

"Ah! ask not what are the vows they breathe—

Or why do those fond arms gently wreath
Around each other? Their eyes, indeed,
Have an answer all—*who love*—may read!

"And deem that happiness still may dwell,
And many a heart with rapture swell
In these oft-times slandered, peaceful bowers,
Unknown to the mean of this world of ours!"

But lo! as we dream a change is there,
And a cold mist poisons the summer air;
A chill comes over the darkening sky,
The demon of Death is passing by!

II.

Again we stroll through a later night,
When the earth is lit by the pale moon-light,

When the stars steal into the deep, blue sky,

When the winds of the summer only sigh!

And under the yew-tree's dismal gloom
One looks on a fair and new-made tomb;
'Tis the grave of her with the gentle brow,
We saw with her lover—only now!

For the fairest flower is borne away
From the earth to heaven—in an hour—a day—

With smiles we look on its budding grace—
To-morrow—we mark an empty place!

But he—who strolled by the maiden's side,
Doth he live and mourn for his hapless bride,
Or—have his footsteps—undistressed—
Turned from the spot where Love should rest!

Alas!—'tis said that he lives alone—
Some hint that his mind is now o'er-thrown—

That even from friends he keeps estranged—

That his heart is bitter now—and changed!

They say that his auburn hair is white,
That the form is bent, so once upright;
That the brow of old, of old so fair,
Is lined with the lines of a stern despair.

III.

'Twas night—and the winds blew cold and shrill,

For a tempest raged on field, on hill—
And the wind was spreading ruin wide—
And the torrents rushed down the mountain's side.

'Twas then that a pale and grief-worn
wife

Knelt down by her husband as he
slept,
And prayed to Heaven for his priceless
life—

And wrung her hands as she sighed and
wept.

But the lids closed over his eyes' wan
light,
And the pallid lips were drawn and tight,
As though to never unclothe again—
And yet they quivered, at times, with
pain.

Ah! how bore she that pitiless hour
That tries the soul to its utmost power—
As over his wasted form she bent,
Her heart to each throb of *his* tired heart
lent?

Grim want had stolen her youth's fair
hue
From the lips that were now a pallid
blue,
And traced on her brow full many a
mark—
And whitened the hair, once richly dark.

But never could quench the spirit high
And true that looked from her lustrous
eye,
That spoke of a soul still true and strong,
And said she could suffer much—and
long.

She soothed his brow with her gentle
touch—

She knew she had suffered long and
much,
And had wept misfortune's saddest tears—
But *this*—was beyond the grief of years!

"They say that sorrow is easier borne
When a dear friend with us seeks to
mourn"—

She said, in a low and faltering tone,
And kissed the face that was now as
stone.

"Yet—love!—I would rather pine alone
In a spot where none might hear me
weep,

Than see the hopes of thy youth o'er-
thrown—

And thy path wiped out on Fame's
grand steep!"

* * * * *

But the scene again had changed, and the
blast,

Of the tempest with the night had passed—
And the morning came and the blue sky
smiled

On a lonely cot on a moorland wild—

But oh! in that cot was a calm more deep
Than all the calm of the outward scene,
For there was a cold, unbroken sleep
Where the deepest grief but now had
been.

For ever together now they slept—
Poor lovers!—and peace was in each
heart;

And there was rest for the eyes that wept,
A rest that never could now depart!

The Spirit of Death was brooding there,
The sufferer's bitter pains were o'er;
The aching brows had been eased of care,
The World could torture and scorn no
more!

SECOND SERIES OF VARIETIES FROM A SCRAP BOOK.

INTRODUCTION.

I LISTEN to the voices of past years,
That oft awaken in the midnight gloom;
Some piteous with the signs of weary
tears,

Some faint as sighs breathed o'er a
lover's tomb—

In the Watches of the Night!

Again I hear the songs of love—the lays
Of constancy still echo through the sky;
Now chords are struck of some full hymn
of praise,

Now comes the ring of Victory's great
cry—

In the Watches of the Night!

So do I hear the shriek of bitter pain,
 The long-drawn moan of anguish, low
 but deep;
 The hopeless sigh of an o'erwearied brain,
 Or of the broken heart that wails to
 sleep—

In the Watches of the Night!

Again I hear, ere yet the starlight pales,
 Or the clouds gather in the darkening
 air,

The dreary echoes of malignant tales,
 The burden of a passing wild despair—
 In the Watches of the Night!

All these come back again—again awaken
 When even the lattice by no sound is
 shaken—

When but the moaning of the sea is heard,
 Or the weird cry of some forlorn night
 bird—

In the Watches of the Night!

TO THE FAIR MEMORIES OF THE PAST.

FAIR memories of the past! leave—leave
 me not

Until mine eyes upon this earth shall
 close;

Let me remember each fair, sunny spot
 Of earth—even to each bud of summer's
 rose.

Fair memories of the past—no blighting
 cloud,

Such as cruel winds across my sky have
 blown!

Some glorious views of Heaven shall ever
 shroud;

They have been—and will ever rest—
 mine own!

Fair memories of the past—ye come to me
 In hours of brightness as in hours of
 grief—

A ray of light, now, on a stormy sea,
 A golden glint upon an autumn leaf.

Fair memories of the past—unburied yet,
 If faded with the passing of thy years—
 With the last rays of suns so long since
 set—

With melancholy storms of earlier tears.

Fair memories of the past—fain would I
 keep

Ye bright until the hour of earth's last
 sleep!

Then—should we waken in far happier
 skies,

May ye with us—immortal—also rise!

THE GHOSTS OF MY IDEALS.

There
 The ghost of my Ideal stands.—LOWELL.

THE ghosts of my Ideals!—a pale crowd—
 Passing before me in the dim twilight;
 Here note we one of whom the head is
 bowed,

Lids falling over eyes no longer bright.

The ghosts of my Ideals!—with a sigh
 I watch each half-defined and misty
 shape,

As slowly, mournfully, they pass me by
 In the sad dress that seems the dead to
 drape!

The ghosts of my Ideals!—full of fears
 One looks upon each pale, each marble
 face;

Each cheek seems wasted by the fall of
 tears,

Fallen o'er long-past grief or grim
 disgrace!

Alas! how wrongly once we prized each
 heart,

So oftentimes but empty, cold and vain;
 Yet from our visions it is sad to part—

For they shall seek us not on earth
 again!

The tale is melancholy, even as old:
 But still the brow of *one* a wreath en-
 twines—

One of whom saintly legends shall be
 told,

One upon whom the light of Heaven
 shines!

IS IT NOT KNOWN?

ALAS! is it not known—life's varied days
 Carry their shadows with them to the
 last!

And light, departing from earth's earlier
ways,
May leave a space behind, sombre and
vast.

What shall restore the lost faith of our
youth,
That steadfast trust that once our hearts
enjoyed?

Nay! Time hath proved to man the bitter
truth
That things neglected are at last
destroyed!

Faith, lost, is as a corpse, to which the
breath
Shall never more—ah! *never more* re-
turn;
Nothing shall raise the heavy hand of
death—
Breathe fire into the ashes of the urn!

Neither shall Love, once hurt, be sound
again—
The path is lost we once with roses
strewed!
Not as the moon shall it but change and
wane,
Then with its former beauty be
imbued!

O keep thy faith in love deep in thy
heart,
And thou may'st hear on earth a noble
strain
Of godlike music—never to depart
So long as thou shalt in her sphere re-
main!

PATIENCE!

PATIENCE is what in life men most do
need—

Patience to see the plant spring from the
seed—

Patience to note the trees, pruned in our
days,
Bear fruit that ripens in the sun's warm
rays.

Patience to wait, through tempests of the
night,
And watch them pass away at dawn of
light,

When shall the sun, uprising, smile again,
On gloomy wood and on mistladen plain.

Patience to see the tender flowers reborn,
That, one past season, had been crushed
and torn;
That yet, repaying all our anxious care,
Send fragrance forth renewed, upon the
air.

Patience to bear the insult and the wrong,
Knowing that if the days of earth be long,
So may the skies be peaceful in a world,
Where the soiled flags of earth's fierce
wars are furled!

Aye! patience in all things to bear God's
will—
Till such time that the storms of earth are
still!
Then Peace and Love — Love with its
golden store,
Shall meet us when life's troubles are no
more!

ALL WHO WOULD FAIN DO GOOD.

SOMETHING, friends, like a "baptism of
fire,"

Must all of us submit to, who would
fain

Do good—and faith, in other souls, inspire,
By showing fortitude in bearing pain,
A fearlessness of slander, a resolve
To fight life's battles bravely, nor "evolve"
From its vexed problems what others had
not done,

Who Life's strange races, ere our own,
have run!

This wild conceit which leads men's feet
astray

Into new paths through which each
blindly *fags*,

Trusting themselves until is lost the way,
Yet hoping ever to steer clear of
"snags,"

As down the swollen stream of life they
float,

Not always masters of the time-worn boat,
Or of th' unseasoned vessel of new build,
With a false ballast or mean burden filled!

Aye! 'tis this wildness, frenzy, of conceit,
 This firm belief that in themselves they
 hold,
 This cherished faith that they can guide
 their feet,
 And thus be never rash, but simply
 bold—
 'Tis *this* that leads them into evil roads,
 Bids them knock at the doors of strange
 abodes,
 Lands them in foul, dark places, when
 poor souls,
 They deem their footsteps near the noblest
 goals!

YET I HAVE HAD SO MUCH OF JOY.

THINK not my fate beneath this earthly
 sky
 Hath been exceptionally calm and fair;
 That on a path but smooth and sunny I
 Have travelled—untouched or by grief,
 or care!

Not so!—much sorrow here hath been my
 lot,
Beyond what lips, or pen, may ever tell;
 The hand of woe, of death, for me stayed
 not—
 One echoes heard of many a solemn
 knell.

The loss of things of earth that had been
 cherished
 So tenderly, hath one escaped not here,
 The fair buds of my early hopes have
 perished,
 Touching the heart with anguish and
 with fear.

Yet—have I had so much of joy, of light,
 Of Love's strong help in all life's darker
 days,
 That I have come out from the shades of
 night,
 Again to give God grateful thanks and
 praise.

Aye! and to thank Heaven for the loving
 care,
 That I, in all the time of storms, had
 met;
 Saving me from the shadows of despair,
 Until my feet in firmer ways were set.

Yes! this I owed, under high heaven, to
 Love,
 And looking upward to the worlds above,
 I pray that in the future I may meet
 Love that as faithful is—as strong, as
 sweet!

"DARK DAYS THAT ARE NO MORE."

"Dark days that are no more,"
 Now are their echoes little but a sigh;
 The tempests have passed o'er—
 The sunset lightens up a peaceful sky.

"Dark days that are no more—"
 Days when the voice of malice was abroad;
 When, as in days of yore,
 Men falsehoods told when calling on the
 Lord!

Romance not always clings
 Around the shadows of our vanished hours;
 Many envenomed things
 Leave their foul traces in earth's sunniest
 bowers

Aye! "days that are no more,"
 Perhaps less calmly sweet
 Than some, passed on Life's later, calmer
 shore,
 With gentle billows washing our tired
 feet.

Thus, we live not in fear
 Of changes in our day—
 Of echoes fallen, altered, on the ear,
 They thrill the heart with little of dismay.

Sweet voices oft awaken
 That bring no longer pain,
 Since angels of their echoes charge have
 taken,
 That we, in Heaven, may meet them yet
 again!

CONSOLING REFLECTIONS.

LINES TO —.

SWEET! had I found no foes, I had not
 known
 The faithfulness of love so deep as thine;
 Sweet! had I met no storms I had not
 grown
 To prize so lovingly the calm sunshine.

Had I not heard the voice of angry hate
And felt the heavy blows by malice
dealt,
I had not learned that love could be so
great,
Or the bright glory of its trust have
felt.

Had I not seen of many flowers the blight,
Mine own I had not guarded with such
care;
Prized them that they were wholesome,
sweet and bright,
And—gratefully—felt few could be more
fair.

Had not my pastures suffered from the
drought,
I had not gladly heard the thunders roll,
Nor had the fall of freshening showers
brought

Such grateful rapture to my thirsty soul!

Aye! had I known not hate, I had not
known
The faithfulness of love as deep as thine;
Sweet! had I met no storms I had not
grown
To prize so lovingly the calm sunshine!

PAIN AND LOVE!

PAIN and Love—ah! Love and Pain—I
might
By ye well typify mine earthly years—
The one that shines as with celestial light,
The other full of darkness—anguish—
tears.

Pain—Oh! I know thee but too well, thy
face
Is pale—thy thin lips are full tightly
pressed;
Lines are upon thy brow—not those of
grace,
Thine arms are crossed, and folded on
thy breast.

By day her mouth shuts in her piercing
screams,
With looks upturned to Heaven, Pain—
rigid—stands;
By night she hath the ghastliest of dreams,
Her brows are knit—tight-clenched the
swollen hands.

Love standeth near, with gentle, pitying
eyes,
And seeks to stay the utterance of the
shriek;
Changes the groan into but weary sighs,
And fain of coming happier days would
speak.

I know ye both—oh! Pain and Love—ye
go
With me—were with me early—will be
late!
Until mine eyes perceive the tender glow
Of other skies that shine through death's
grim gate!
March, 1888.

THY CROSS, BELOVED!

"I HAVE been as thy Cross in life," she
said,
Resting upon his loving breast her head;
"Thy Cross in life, and yet one borne so
well
None of thine anxious path could ever tell.

"Thy Cross in life—yet one that thou
would'st never
Lay down, though it might burden thee
for ever
In this sad world, in which thou, soul
and heart,
Hast borne so noble and so brave a part.

"Thy Cross in life, oh! my beloved—and
yet
No one thy steadfast front hath ever met
To note the lines of discontent; one weak
Complaint such lips as thine would scorn
to speak!

"Thy Cross in life, o'er which have roses
grown
At times, and then their petals gently
thrown
Upon thee and around thine onward ways,
Sweetening yet more thy sweet soul's
patient days.

"Thy Cross in life—but not one that shall
be
In realms we both have faith in—realms
above:

There—once more, thine own love, dear,
 thou may'st see,
 Kneeling—with scars removed—glowing
 with love!"*

OF ETERNITY.

Up to the fair blue skies, the deep blue
 skies,
 We lift our sometimes anxious, wondering
 eyes,
 As though to catch some glimpse of angel
 forms

Something to tell us of Eternal Peace,
 Of rest beyond this world's dull calms or
 storms,
 So that our wild heart-beats at last may
 cease!

That wonderful Unknown! — the Spirit
 realms!

Of which no echo reaches earthly ears,
 And where—dream we!—no tempest over-
 whelms,

Where there are no more weary prayers
 or tears!

That wonderful Unknown—O! could some
 voice

But reach us, dwellers on earth's lower
 plane!

Ah! yet might not our untrained souls
 rejoice;

There may be knowledge that shall but
 o'erstrain

By acquisition, weakly, feeble souls,
 Such as upon their knees will shrieking
 fall

Whene'er o'er head the angry thunder
 rolls,

And whom its fiery bolts shall but appal.
 Thus it were well man fretted not, that we
 Of earth no glimpse have of Eternity—
 So long as we within *this* world may
 dwell—

Be it a song from Heaven, or groan from
 Hell.

AGAIN—OF ETERNITY.

So rolls earth's mighty, everlasting ball!
 Nor knows one moment's pause!—when
 some shall fall

From out the ranks that crowd its surface;
 still

Shall other crowds pour swiftly in and fill
 The spaces not a moment empty—Aye!
 Thus rolls the earth unto Eternity!

Some, quitting it (and firmly hold we
 this),

Do so to enter fairer realms above;
 While others—shut out from the realms of
 bliss,

Unfitted for the ranks of perfect love
 Through their own deeds of cursedness and
 blight,

Descend into the world of hopeless night!

This is our faith, and yet how far away
 Seem the bright hopes of everlasting day!

Not in the stars—cry some—nor in the
 sun,

Vow others—and, uplifting their dull
 eyes,

Pray we may meet them in His own fair
 skies!

And thus can only say, Heaven's will
 be done!

AH! NONE MAY KNOW!

NONE on this half-lit realm of ours may
 know

The secrets of God's strange, mysterious
 lands,

What winds, softer than Araby's, may
 blow,

What silver waves may roll o'er golden
 sands.

Ah! realms where bright, where glorious
 eyes may gaze,

With curious scrutiny into our own!
 Shall they hold memories of earthly days,
 Or shall earth's secrets be to them un-
 known?

Who knows what forms shall greet us on
 that beach

Whence come the sound of billows never
 ours;

What to our wondering spirits shall they
 teach

Of higher lives and of celestial powers?

* REPLY.—No, no! not my cross; my angel of goodness. The music of my life for nearly sixty years without a discordant note. H. D., 1910.

What fruits shall ripen in their glowing
bowers—

What trees their graceful shadows o'er
us fling—

What shall the perfumes be of their sweet
flowers—

What songs shall birds of unknown
plumage sing?

No! none on this dim realm of ours may
know

The secrets of God's strange, mysterious
lands;

What winds, softer than Araby's, may
blow,

What silver waves may roll o'er golden
sands!

A STEPPING-STONE!

THE cries—the troubled cries—of earth
are still—

The winds no more are northern—fierce
and bleak—

The purple shadows passing from the hill,
Have left in tender light its lofty peak.

Would we could hold and keep these hours
of peace,

And bid earth's angry sounds and echoes
cease!

Ah, Heaven! and is this world to be a foil
To Thine—where shall be neither grief,
nor toil?

Aye! and is peace not meant for dwellers
here,

And shall these angry skies be never clear;
And shall the world's vexed soul not know
a calm,

Nor Thy Almighty Hand bring healing
balm?

Yes, this, our world, may be a "stepping-
stone"

To that fair Universe we deem Thine own;
Where there is everlasting love and joy,
Where moth shall not corrupt, nor death
destroy!

Nor should we look up from this realm of
care

To yon blue sky, with longing in our
breast,

But for our faith that Thou art dwelling
there,

In some fair home of glory and of rest!

GOD OF THE UNIVERSE.

GOD of the Universe—God of the wars

That shake the earth—God of the stormy
night;

Yet God of regions of uncounted stars,
Of wondrous realms, it may be, of new
Light!

With faith in Thee, although so far away,
With faith unwavering, unto Thee we
pray,

And hear Thy mighty Voice, e'en in the
roar

Of waves that break upon this planet's
shore.

With faith we hear Thee and in faith
await

The opening of the everlasting gate,
Through which we pass into that world
unknown

Where Thou, for evermore, shalt reign
alone.

Yet are there those—unhappy—who still
swear

They hear Thee not, when storms disturb
the air;

Nor yet in times of peace, nor in the light
Of noontide—nor when planets rule Thy
night.

A faith more wonderful these hold, for
they

Dream that the world goes forth upon its
way

Unheeding its Creator's firm command—
Following no ruling of His mighty Hand!

WANT OF SYMPATHY.

THE blue of eastern and of western skies—
The cold of southern and of northern
Poles;

The light of Russian and Italian eyes,
Are more alike than many human souls.

In early hours of struggle and of pain,
 In days that almost bordered on despair,
 For help we should have turned to
 some in vain,
 For us they did not—may be, *could* not
 —care!

Were they such "friends" as even *custom*
 asked
 Something — a little — they might just
 have cared,
 If we were weary, sick and overtaken,
 If ill or well, on earthly roads, we
 fared.

Untouched by every pleasure, hope, or
 woe
 Of ours—their paths in truth lay so apart,
 We might have suffered, for all *they* could
 know,
 Or wished to learn—from even a broken
 heart!

Our deeper thoughts they always heard
 with sneers,
 Or met by some sarcastic, bitter word;
 Neither in joy, nor sorrow — smiles nor
 tears—
Could they with us, it seemed, be in
 accord.

Yet of this should we speak with little
 blame,
 Neither in the beginning, nor the end,
 Did they not—though so heartless—seek
 to claim
 All that we gladly yield a loving friend!

FORGIVE THE PENITENT.—I.

FORGIVE the penitent—this is but right—
 Not the *impenitent*—*that* folly were!
 For thou could'st scarcely wash a negro
 white,
 Though thou may'st on him lavish a
 life's care!

Give not the serpent room beside thy
 hearth,
 Unless thou hast deprived it of its fangs;
 Let not unguarded be thy simplest path
 If round thy dwelling war's fierce
 trumpet clangs.

The apples that are rotten to the core
 Shall taste of death, however fair their
 rinds;
 The vessels that are near to danger's shore
 We trust not even to the fairest winds.

The pard can change no spot upon his
 skin,
 Nor man one unloved feature of his
 face;
 Nor always rule the impulses within
 That urge him to essay a hopeless race.

Trust not the hypocrite, wherever met,
 He will but court thee for his good
 alone;
 All benefits he lightly will forget
 Whenever he thy friendship would
 disown!

FORGIVE THE PENITENT.—II.

TRULY should we *all* penitents forgive—
 Aye! seventy-seven times, if they grace
 should crave;
 Let not thine enemies unpardoned live,
 Or *thou* wilt go—a sinner—to thy grave!
 Even those that may have wounded thee,
 through all
 Thy troubled days, do thou at last excuse,
 Or Heaven *thyself* may unforgiving call,
 And pardon for *thy* wandering steps
 refuse!

But if thou meetest here an unkind soul
 Who never of wrong-doing will repent,
 Who of free will hath sought an evil goal,
 Nor, looking back, hath e'en his gar-
 ments rent.

O! such an one—who hath no sense of
 shame,
 And who with earth's more worthless
 spirits herds,
 Can, at the least, to pardon have no claim,
 Though yet he calls for pity beyond
 words.

Yet—pardon thou even thy worst of foes,
 Even those who dealt thee thy life's
 hardest blows,
 Nor *ask* for pardon; but—*yield them no
 more*
*The place they held within thy life
 before!*

TOO LATE.

Too Late! that warning some in life
heed not!

Yet all things have their season, as the
flower

That blossomed once in a fair, sunny spot,
Can bloom no longer in a darker hour.

Too Late! Too Late!—the hour has long
passed by,

The hand of love itself shall not restore;
Though summer once, 'tis now a winter's
sky,

The light and glory of the year is o'er!

Too Late!—yon vessel goes down in the
deep,

The graves of our beloved mark not the
earth,

And Faith looks calm, if cold, in her last
sleep,

The tales of trust betrayed have little
worth.

Some ask the wronged for pardon, it is
true,

And seek to walk again a well-known
way;

But leaves of rosemary are mixed with rue,
The once blue sky of friendship now is
grey;

For they have trampled, with a heavy
tread,

On the fair buds of honesty and trust;
And now the rose-leaves they so rudely
shed

Lie soiled — dishonoured — blighted — in
the dust!

TRUTHS!

THOU can'st not make a rotten oak tree
sound—

Alter to human smiles the monkey's
grin,

Or change to snow the Ethiopian's skin,
Or make a primrose grow on poisoned
ground!

O! when you thoughtfully and through
long years

Have proved the selfishness of some
careers;

Have listened to the voices of the "cant-
ing,"

And found them ever, in thy troubles,
wanting—

Remember this—as something in excuse—

Man did not make himself, nor shape
his fate;

If life hath put him to some evil use,

He for another world than this must
wait.

Pass on—it is not even in thy power

To purify that life at thine own will;

Yet, there may come for such some sweeter
hour,

And warmth may come where once the
heart was chill.

LIVING APART!

GOD of the brave!—how many are there
here

Who shrink from earth's strong wars with
paltry fear—

Who, knowing that the sight of a mean
face

Is as a stigma on the English race,

Will dare to call on Heaven, affirming
they

Alone have chosen, here, His holy way!

To spread the truth and to uphold the
right—

For principle to seize their arms—to fight
To bring sweet airs to loathsome dens of
evil,

And by strong means to dispossess the
devil,

Showing Religion's ever-fearless heart:

From all such work as this some "live
apart!"

"I come to bring war and not peace"—
yet these

I speak of do "elect" to leave to others
All wars, that they may live in perfect ease,
Even while they scurvily scoff at their
brothers!

And even pronounce them "worldly"!—
and sit down

Themselves—to throw mud at each hero's
crown!

HAVE FAITH.

LIVE thine own life, my friend—nor care
too much
What others of thine aims and objects
say;
The time shall surely come when past
things touch
That future wherein dawns a fairer day.

Care nothing for the mockery, for the
scorn
Of men—*thy* “folly” may be of the
wise;
Do thou the work for which thou hast been
born,
So far as may be patent to thine eyes.

Smile at the ignorant taunts, the silly
sneers
Of those whose paths thou wilt not make
thine own;
Let none thy hopes destroy, arouse thy
fears,
About that new World that *they* term
unknown.

Have faith, and keep it to thy latest breath;
What hath thy soul approved, to that
hold fast;
Believe, unto the very hour of death,
There is a fairer life when this is past.

Think not thou dost show wisdom to deny
That there shall be some other sphere
than ours;
Ah! mock not at a life beyond *our* sky,
That lies outside thy vision and thy
powers!

OF A STRONG SOUL.

“From my youth up I have truckled to no man,
sought no man’s favour, but . . . been independ-
ent even to a fault.”—LIFE OF LORD WESTBURY,
1888, Vol. II., p. 6.

THESE are the attributes of one *we* know,
And know right well—to no man truckles
he,
Yet, to respect true greatness never slow,
He can pay tribute to the powers that
be.

Yes! of his “independence” none know
well

As we, although many most who crossed
his path
Have something had upon this point to
tell,
While *some* applauded, it moved some to
wrath.

He “truckled unto no man,” for he
thought
That were a thing which ne’er befits the
brave;

He—self-reliant—no man’s favour sought,
And thus his steps will march towards
the grave.

No turning from the tracks he deems the
right
Will be seen in *his* life—*that* could we
swear!

He feareth not the coming of the night,
His soul was never darkened by despair.

And yet—*not* “independent to a fault,”
This could we say not of a mind so wise;
He knew when good advice was “worth
its salt,”
And went through life with calmly
opened eyes!

THIS—WE BELIEVE.

THIS, friends, do we believe; this we
repeat,

That Truth shall hold her own, that Love
is sweet;

That through this greatly slandered world
of ours

Move forms of noble men and women
still;

That earth can yet display her wondrous
powers

With which to war against all forms of
ill.

Believe not all ye hear of evil doing—

The lips of slander frame no words too
truly;

The soul of malice ever is pursuing

Its way—and sin is evermore unruly,
And Envy hath a cold, unblushing cheek,
Nor loves that *any*, good of mortals speak!

Let none the voice of Charity forget,
 And keep ye your good actions in the
 shade;
 And if they be forgotten, let none fret—
 They will be in the balance duly
 weighed!
Nothing will be o'erlooked in the new
 days
 To come; so march we, trusting, on our
 ways!

WORDS OF COMFORT.

FOR THOSE WHOSE GENIUS IS MATURING
LATE!

It has been noticed (with some remarkable excep-
 tions) that "in the case of long-lived and illustrious
 personages * * * they mature late, and when
 ordinary men and women are stolidly stationary in
 middle life, or are even beginning to decline, they
 are but taking their first steps on the path of their
 real career."—MARY SOMERVILLE, *Blackwood's*
Edinburgh Magazine, June, 1888.

AYE! there are autumn roses not less fair
 Than those that blossomed in an earlier
 air—

Roses that oft are stronger than the blast
 Of by-gone tempests passed them o'er
 unslain,

Brighter for all the warm days that have
 passed,
 Breathing a richer perfume o'er the
 plain.

Unlike the blossoms that are immature,
 Often the nobler, brighter, and more pure,
 That they thus bless this world of ours full
 late,

Rising superior to the blows of fate;
 Glad in the sunshine—lofty in their pride,
 One sees them grace wood, garden and
 hill-side.

Tales of our early fruits the wise will tell,
 Tales of the want of sweetness in their
 taste;

Our gardeners know the sickly hue full
 well

Of those that ripened with unseemly
 haste;

Despite the foolish lays that have been
 sung,

The Nestors of this world are never young!

TO THE UNSYMPATHETIC.

"WHAT dost thou know of sorrow—thou
 that dwellest

Where there is little of the Life Divine?
 What dost thou know of wisdom—thou that
 tellest

Only of experiences as poor as thine?"

Incapable of feeling Love, thou darest
 To cast a doubt upon her presence here;
 Truly but little for the truth thou carest,
 Thou hast not smiled with her, nor wept
 her tear!

Untouched by Charity's more tender grace
 Thou goest forth amongst the graves
 of earth,

Nor seest the bitter travails of thy race,
 Or in such lights as move thee but to
 mirth.

Therefore, no wonder—being deaf and
 blind,

Thou can'st not in earth's sweetness take
 thy part,

Nor know the joys nor sorrows of thy
 kind,

The troubles of the tender soul and
 heart.

Yet—insolent and ignorant, as vain,
 Dost thou of foolish brain and brazen
 throat,

Stand in the *shadows* of this earthly plain
 Startling all passers-by with thy harsh
 note!

Yet—"What know'st thou of sorrow—thou
 that dwellest

Where there is little of the Life Divine!
 What dost thou know of wisdom—thou that
 tellest

Only of experiences as poor as thine?

FALSE TEACHERS.

FALSE Teachers are there in this world—
 Beware!

They come into thy path with sneaking
 tread;

They carry in their hands a net—a snare—
 They throw it softly—surely—o'er thy
 head!

Aye! they will catch thee with their net—
Beware!

Yes! they will catch thee—thou wilt see
not how;

In darkness may they seek thee out—take
care!

Distrust the smiling lips—the oily brow.

These are the hypocrites, who sadly sigh
That nothing in this world is sweet and
fair—

That beauty is but skin-deep, or a dye—
That Faith and Truth are gems, *ex-
ceeding* rare!

False Teachers! there are myriads on this
earth—

They come in sunshine, and they come
in storms—

Now robbed by folly—now by foolish mirth,
They come by ones and twos—they come
in swarms!

And Vanity is as the bane of some
Of those that walk with pharisaic feet;
Their souls are even as a broken drum,
That gives back hollow sounds to those
that beat!

TO THE SELFISH.

FROM lips like thine shall come the well-
known cry:

“Drink and be merry—on the morn we
die!

What unto us the world’s distress, or grief?
Enjoy the passing pleasures — all too
brief!”

Yes! live thy paltry life — strain every
nerve

For thine own purposes, by day or
night;

Let thy thought ever be *thyself* to serve,
And “in the world’s eyes” do what
seemeth right!

And shrinking to be strong—lest it bring
down

The scorn and envy of some, *deemed* thy
friends,

In any way to tarnish that poor crown,
That they have crowned thee with, for
their own ends!

Ah, no! true courage shall not here be
thine,

Such strength is rarely owned by such
as thou;

And never round such common heads shall
shine

The wreaths that glitter round a noble
brow!

Self! self! ’tis always self with vainer
minds,

So shall their fruits have many an evil
spot;

They strive to keep intact the outer rinds,
While the fair core *within* shall surely
rot!

TO FRETFUL SPIRITS.

SWEET lessons we upon this earth have
learnt,

And deeply these are on the memory burnt,
As, musing, through life’s many fields we
pass,

To note the blossoms springing through
the grass!

In the deep forests flowers of beauty grow,
Down the high mountains the bright rivers
flow;

O’er the green lowlands bend fair, loving
skies,

To which a thousand gracious scents arise!

Fruits fill our many orchards — bending
down

The boughs that droop, not with a weary
frown,

But even as smiling through that gracious
weight,

Until the clouds form, and the year grows
late.

Voices, thrilling with happiness, with love,
Echo through the green shade of sum-
mer’s wood,

As grateful prayers are poured to realms
above,

For things God grants to man, so sweet
and good.

And worthy deeds upon this earth are done
That those who dwell beneath its glowing
sun

May faith have in the noble and the brave,
Not go down fretful, fretting, to the
grave!

BE BRAVE OF SOUL.

BE brave of soul, unflinching be thy heart,
Write thy life cleanly on its turning
pages;
In *good* deeds of this earth take thou thy
part,
Extracting wisdom from the by-gone
ages.

Live not for self alone—rather beware
Of climbing, with lone steps, the
mountain ranges;
Yet fearless—fly no dangers, save despair;
Dread naught, though time and tide
bring many changes.

Spend not thy days in counting up the
sins
That stain a brother's, or a sister's, lot;
'Tis not the Pharisee that ever wins
A world that the self-righteous enter
not!

Think little of thyself—of others much;
Point thou not sharply out another's
shame;
Put thine own virtue nobly "to the touch,"
Ere for thyself the simplest prize you
claim.

Be modest!—let not vanity o'erpower
Thy brains, and make thee but a
laughing-stock!
Boast not of even a single spotless hour,
Or Conscience at thy door may sternly
knock!

OUR HOURS OF JOY ARE BRIEF.

THE hours of joy are brief, alas! how brief,
One scarcely o'er the well-grown tree
rejoices,
Than one shall note the withering of the
leaf,
And hear the echo of the mourner's
voices.

Buds thou hast guarded through so many
hours,
Some sharp wind may destroy before
their prime;
The fruits that have been ripening in thy
bowers,
Thine enemy may gather ere their time.

Some who seemed friends in thy too trust-
ing youth,
May be thy friends but while the sun-
beams last;
May have no honour — may betray the
truth,
Nor ever stand against a stormy blast.

Who shall in all *thy sorrows* stand thy
friend,
Who scorn to breathe foul slander's
bitter breath,
On those in all dark hours of life depend,
Treasure them to the very hour of death.

THE HEART KNOWS ITS OWN BITTERNESS.

THROUGH the vexed pathways of this
world, the heart
Knows its own burden; few may break
the seal
Of its dark secrets therein to take part,
Or for its deepest griefs can ever feel!
And those who haste to blame the paths
men tread,
Have taken of them oft an erring view;
Full many lessons here have been misread,
Or read by lights, faint, feeble, and un-
true.

Aye! "*its own burden*," but to God
alone,
The weary soul may oft unburdened be;
He knoweth, and can understand the groan
Of those who cry to Him, Whom they
can neither hear nor see!

Not only to the stranger grief is hidden,
Veiled with an anxious care from curious
sight;
There may be only one who shall un-
chidden,
Search every corner hidden from the
light.

Aye! only one! and sometimes not that
one,
And the soul fights its many wars alone!

WHO SHALL LOOK BACK WITH AN UNTROUBLED EYE?

WHO shall look back upon his past, I
wonder,
Nor sorrow o'er some paths his steps
have taken;
Nor note too late full many a dreary
blunder,
Nor feel his faith in his own wisdom
shaken!

Who shall look back with an untroubled
eye
On errors that no distance seems to veil;
Who shall not breathe at least *one* heavy
sigh,
As he recalls his life's entangled tale?

All fair things perish—roses fade away,
Winter shall come, and we but seek in
vain,
Through atmospheres that now are dim
and grey,
To count the flowers that brightened
once our plain.

Here are the graves of dear ones—here lie
those
Whose lips long since we kissed, whose
hands we pressed,
Who shared our pleasures, and who
soothed our woes—
Lost to us in this life—cold—and at
rest!

A hopeless, tangled skein, O Life! wert
thou,
Looked we not forward to a fairer day,
When light shall shine on an unclouded
brow,
Where is no grief, no death, and no
decay.

EVEN AS A ROLLING STONE.

BARE facts are—(one might say of some,
well-known,
Who *gather* them)—*even as a rolling stone,*

Made use of over fields of blighted grass
Are rolled, to gather, even as they pass,
Clods full of evil matter — grubs and
worms—

Of hurtful embryos and of poison germs—
Aye! even myriads of the like, and each
Might grow, perchance, into a Franken-
stein,

And—Cyclops-like — into the clouds to
reach,

Where little light on its gross shape
might shine;

Saving, at times, the lightning's vivid
glare

Reveals that some unwholesome thing is
there,

Whose evil shadow on the earth may fall,
The timid things beneath it to appal!

What fearful legends of the days of old
By some—alas! that unknown *some*—were
told,

Later, "*established truths*" *believed*—alas!
Under this head what fearful falsehoods
pass!

Now we are taught, now in these doubting
days,

To listen coldly to loud-sounding tales;
To yield a hesitating blame, or praise,

And thus the grandest record often fails
To touch—aye! even that we but feebly
trust

The histories told us of the mighty dust!
Think of th' opposing, the conflicting views
Taken of past deeds, the contrasting hues
Which all things can reflect: while this
alone

Seems fixed—that Truth and Falsehood
here shall own

Their separate platforms on this earth of
ours,

Strewn with sweet fruits, dead seeds, and
poison flowers!

TO A FRIEND—

"GO BRAVELY ONWARD."

THE paths of life are full of pitfalls; here
Across the road a streamlet, deep, if clear,
Is running: wetted to the very skin
Is he who fain his way through it would
win!

Here see a pool, quite choked with stone
and weed,
Here leeches make the tender limbs to
bleed;
Here snakes coil round the ankles, so the
feet
Know not how to go forward, nor retreat.

And when the wilds are gained, then let
the ear
Listen to catch the hidden wild beast's
growl;
With weapon firmly gripped, but not
through fear,
The brave go ever where shall evil
prowl.

Or seek some unknown city—not in dark,
Nor secret hours, but in the open light;
Fear not, though you may hear the watch-
dog bark,
He shall not harm thee while thy ways
are right.

Aye! Aye! fear not, but forward press, my
friend,
Go bravely onward, even to the end;
Look up to Heaven, where light is still
serene,
And see thy heart keeps steadfast, thy
steps clean.

ALAS FOR THE UNHAPPY CYNIC!

THE lessons Life shall teach us are not
few,
Nor those that always gratefully we
learn—
That lips are false—hearts shamefully un-
true,
That many souls with bitter malice
burn.

This knowledge marks the harsh and
gloomy view,
The cynic takes of earth and all its
creatures,
Until he dares deny the sky is blue,
Or that the world hath aught but evil
features!

And, for the weeds, such seeth not the
flowers,
He noteth nor the heartsease nor the
rose;
His eyes are fixed, through all the passing
hours,
To where the nettle or the thistle grows.

He counts the sickly lambkins of the fold,
And in the herd descries the halting
beast;
He sees the plants that bloom not for the
cold,
And feels the wind for ever in the east!

He seeth not the nuts are ripe and brown,
As through the woodlands listlessly he
strolls;
He seeth but an angry sun go down—
Alas! alas! for such unhappy souls!

LESSONS OF LIFE.

LESSONS of Life—aye! many have been
taught us!
But none more precious while on earth
we live,
Than that our own experience hath brought
as,
Even the unfailing joy that Love can
give!

I know now that no days of storm and
rain
Shall ever mark the gems of Love with
rust;
And if by lances of the envious slain,
Love still shall bless earth with her
precious dust!

Love! thou hast never failed me, and yet I
Have tried thee sorely, as, alas! I know;
Have been ungrateful for thy glorious sky,
And thoughtless when thy pulse beat
faint and low!

Aye! faint and low through anguish, that
which feeds
Upon the fairest of this earth of ours;
Too oft thy rose was shadowed by tall
weeds,
While grubs were fattening on thy
sweetest flowers!

Love! Love! forsake me never!—at thy shrine
 I kneel, some sweet flowers round thy brow to twine!
 All of my best—how little this, alas!
 Into thy heart from mine own soul shall pass!

LIFE'S SHARP LESSONS!

YES! of sharp lessons Life is made up here—
 The lessons of the smile and of the tear;
 Of days whereon but skies of summer burn,
 And when we nothing of the north wind learn!

Of days when summer fruits are ripe and sweet,
 And when the daisies spring around our feet;
 When but prosperity our outlook yields,
 When golden corn is ripening in our fields.

When friends are fair and smiling as the skies,
 And when true Love looks fondly in our eyes;
 When health and happiness wait on our ways,
 Prolonging, with our gratitude, our days.

Then comes the change—the days grow chill and dark,
 Conflicts and loss the passing moments mark;
 Love may be true, but “friends” turn into foes,
 And seek their best to deepen all our woes.

Thickly upon our path vile seeds they sow,
 Nothing of sweetness they appear to know.
 Yet faithful that Love ever will be true,
 We look to God, beyond His skies’ clear blue.

TRUST GOD AND LOVE MANKIND.

THUS each day, with its burdens, passes by,
 And bears those burdens where shall no man tell;
 Some may be carried to a purer sky,
 And others may, alas! go down to Hell.

Here, truly, we “see darkly,” and know not
 What is of mankind the mysterious fate—
 How gloomy or how fair may be his lot,
 If one of holy love, or one of hate.

I am content to know not—nay! to me
 The futile longing the vain spirit feels
 To read the secrets of Futurity
 Is useless—man shall break not here its seals!

Cherish thy life, but not with peevish care;
 Trust God and love mankind—so shall thy feet
 Sink in few quagmires; of the vile beware;
 Spurn evil; let thy daily thoughts be sweet.

THEY THINK TOO WILDLY.

THEY think too wildly who believe that man
 Shall change his nature with the roll of years,
 And deem it noted in Creation’s plan,
 That he shall follow more complex careers.

Fashion shall change—and cruelty, refined,
 Take place of what was once but brutal force;
 The noble and the ignominious mind
 Shall work out still, on earth, the old-world course.

Vice is concealed the *deadlier* that concealed!
 Yet pays it tribute to a time more fair;
 Yes! oft a power more fatal may it wield
 That it disguises it with craft and care!

Still, there is gain, nor yet ignoble gain,
That it should shrink back from reproachful light;
No longer of its deeds of evil *vain*,
But seeking to enshroud them in the night!

Therefore are many shocked as it unveils
Its features that had been concealed of yore;
And shrinks from brazen utterance of those tales,
That men, with unmoved souls, had heard before!

THE "PRINCIPLES" OF SOME WELL-KNOWN.

SOME people's "principles" are curious things—
They boast that theirs are firmer than a rock!
Yet you will find them fly as though on wings
At any threatening of an earthquake's shock!

Some much of their own charities will speak,
As of their "dearest friend's" good deeds will boast;
Will posture as *so* kindly and *so* meek,
And yet none keener be a foe to roast!

With ingenuity of lip and mind
Will they excuse all of the "poor" of earth,
And hundreds of apologies they find
For sinners of their own apparent—
worth!

But let a noble or a rich man sin,
Though his temptations be a hundred-fold
Greater than theirs, no pardon shall *he* win—
At once they turn him out into the cold!

Glibly they quote about how hard it is
For any — rich — to enter through Heaven's gate;
Envy will bubble with a flattering fizz,
And Mercy's voice be drowned by that of Hate!

To some 'tis easy riches to abuse,
And speak of them with a contemptuous air;
Yet query if they ever would refuse,
If offered them, the rich man's robe to wear!

EXPERIENCES!

FILLED with a lofty purpose, as I deemed,
Determined to expose the mean and vile,
I stepped into a wasps' nest, as it seemed,
Free being from suspicion, as from guile.

These wasps were hidden from my careless eyes,
Eyes that to fear had always been a stranger;
Had I been but a little "worldly-wise,"
Something, it may be, had warned me of my danger.

Even so another, in the days of old,
When the like lessons, it may be, were taught,
Once stepped into a puddle, we are told,
And also suffered from *his* want of thought!

I scarcely need to tell you, in my case,
How I was punished for my "step"—
nor how
The wasps flew madly at my unveiled face,
Then settled, in a cluster, on my brow!

But, if I suffered, suffering now has ceased!
And *good came* (*that* my comfort is at least)—
From thus disclosing to the public gaze,
The vile wasps'-nests endangering others' ways!

I SHOULD NOT LIKE.

I SHOULD not like to leave this world of ours,
Fearing mankind, rather than fearing God!

The dread of earthly, not of Heavenly,
powers,
Of nothing sharper than mankind's birch-
rod
The terror of my soul!—rather would I
Give up my feeble ghost at once—and die!

Truly the way of a good man, *I know*,
Warmeth the bosom with a generous glow;
Neither is it what Heaven would dis-
approve
That we do greatly value human love;
For that poor soul that shall true love
despise,
Is as contemptible as it is unwise!

As for the mean of earth, but little
cares
Have I — if sometimes o'er them one
despairs;
Great, noble souls shall still exist—and
this
Must ever bring reflective spirits bliss!
For little darkens more the human mind
Than to lose faith and trust in its own
kind.

I WOULD BE UNTO THE LAST.

No! I would be, unto the very last,
A lover of the human life of earth;
Listening to hear its echoes ringing past,
Now full of sorrow, now of *happy*
mirth.

For yonder come the sounds of echoing
strife,
Following upon the prayers for rest and
peace,
The cries of the mad conflicts of this
life,
Whose human wrongs and pangs shall
never cease.

But *also* voices of men's grateful thanks,
For strength, through which were
troubles nobly borne,
That rise up from the great world's serried
ranks,
Mingled with sighs of those who —
blessed—mourn.

Under the quiet stars I love to muse
Upon a sphere than ours more calm and
sweet,
And where the skies have other—brighter
—hues,
Where trouble's groan the ear shall never
meet.

Where tones of anger, turbulent and loud,
Shall never reach us from earth's distant
crowd;
And where the smile of God on all shall
rest,
And souls, at last, be peaceful, grateful,
blest!

SHALL I FORGET?

BECAUSE I have known hate, shall I
forget
All the sweet hours that I with love have
passed?
Because the sun in gloomy clouds may set,
Shall I grieve through the hours that
gloom may last?

Doth not the busy day bring restful night,
Doth not the heavy storm bring later
peace;
The shade seem cool after the glaring light,
After the famine cometh not increase?

Think not no flower may bloom because
the weeds
At times may seem triumphant in men's
paths;
Look not upon the rich man's gold with
greed,
Although sits poverty by many hearths.

Doth not the fond voice of a faithful
friend
Sound sweeter after the cold tones of
hate?
After war's march, is it no pleasant end
To enter through a friendly, open gate?

It shall not be the wiser soul that grieves
O'er complex lessons found in paths
below;
But in the good of all things it believes,
Nor seeks life's deeper mysteries to
know.

"FROM SEEMING EVIL STILL
EDUCING GOOD!"

HAD I not evil known, then had I not
So prized the good throughout my
earthly days;

HAD I but an unclouded, sunny lot,
I had not felt the pride of stronger
ways.

HAD I not looked for footprints of the
great,
I had not left behind earth's meaner
feet;

HAD I not heard the rasping voice of Hate,
I had not learnt that *Truth* could be so
sweet.

HAD I not known the tempests of rude
seas,
Nor earth chilled by the breath of Arctic
skies,
Nor smelt the evil airs that bring disease,
The sweeter ones I had not learned to
prize.

HAD I not tasted fruits unsound and
sour,
I had not given for *sound* ones grateful
thanks;

HAD I not sometimes plucked a blighted
flower,
I had not prized the fair ones of our
banks.

HAD I known naught of bitterness and
rue,
I had not learnt to watch with such fond
eyes,
The sweeter, fairer blossoms that I *knew*
Love's hand could gather under brighter
skies!

THOUGH IT IS LATE.

AYE—truly, it is late—yet I am glad
The veil is rent that covered long mine
eyes;
It needs be that the methods oft are sad,
By which our soul *at last* becometh
wise.

Yes! I am glad the coward, sneak and
liar

Are known, ere yet the closing of the
day,
And that the thistle, nettle, and the briar,
No longer over-run mine earthly way.

I would that I had known these things
before!

It might have saved no few fair barques
of mine
From drifting outward to some treacherous
shore,
On which the sunbeams never clearly
shine.

The living sadly mourn o'er their loved
dead,

For the sad lesson surely we acquire,
Which in life's book, through ages past,
men read,
That all must suffer here from storm and
fire.

For loving hearts have oft been wrung
through lies,

Aye! loving hearts that now are still
and cold;
One breathes on earth so many weary
sighs,
Ere its long, varied lessons shall be
told.

WHEAT AND CHAFF.

To separate the wheat from chaff is not
The easy task it seemeth to some eyes;
So mixed are they in some poor creatures'
lot,
'Tis even a task to disconcert the wise!

Alas! one often casts the wheat aside,
To save the chaff, with much of careful
thought;
The one is scattered—scattered far and
wide,
The other to our garners have we
brought!

And thus to chaff, that, rightly, should
be burnt,
We give most undeserved and ample
room:

A lesson that by few, alas! is learnt,
Even from their early years—unto the
tomb.

The wheat by the four winds of Heaven
is blown,

Reacheth strange quarters betwixt south
and north!

And into strength and beauty may have
grown,

Unhelped by the rude hands that cast
it forth.

Yet would these rude hands claim it,
although they

No heed took of it till its *happy* prime,
Then, when it beautified the world's broad
way,

Would claim to be its owners for all
time!

A MISTAKEN FAITH.

It is a common *faith*, we note, with
some,

That your plain merits even your foes
will praise!

They may, perchance, grow "delicately
dumb"

As to your faults, through life's success-
ful days!

Yet greater blunder scarcely could be
made—

The higher you in earthly light may
stand,

The more some seek to throw you into
shade,

If not—to point at you with scornful
hand!

It even may be that they fear you; *then*
They seek to bring on you a blacker
fate;

They vilify you in the eyes of men,
"Despitemfully" to "use you" lie in
wait.

Aye! you become to them the surer mark,
That you stand out against a brilliant
sky;

The while they hide, with caution, in the
dark,

From whence their poisoned arrows they
let fly!

No surer sign of greatness can there be
Than to be followed by Hate's envious
eyes;

Thy virtues her small eyes will never see,
Thy failings she will paint of monstrous
size!

STUDENTS OF THE BOOK OF LIFE.

THERE must be many students who lay
down

The Book of Life with melancholy frown,
As they of all men's countless follies read—
Of hearts of meanness, and of souls of
greed,

Of all the loathed walks of Hypocrisy,
The oily lips and the deceiving eye.

Not few life's earlier labours will begin

By a loud outcry at the ways of sin,
A vaunt that they have stainless hands
and white,

And loathe all paths that lead into the
night;

But yet *themselves* will follow in sin's
path!

Themselves, at last, to seat beside its
hearth!

'Tis one thing to point out, to others' eyes,
The footprints of the knave, or the un-
wise;

'Tis one thing to throw scorn upon thy
brother,

To sweeten thine *own* actions is another!

The first to some is "glorious"—!—from
the second

But little pleasure can by them be
reckoned!

So, there are many students who lay down
The Book of Life with melancholy frown,

As they of all earth's many follies read,
Of hearts of meanness and of souls of
greed,

Of all the loathed walks of Hypocrisy,
The oily lips and the deceitful eye.

TO SEE OR SEE NOT.

THEY love to signal out the graves that
mark,

With their "pale fingers" the cathedral
gloom;

Each seeming as complaining in the dark
That neither wreaths nor flowers adorn
their tomb!

The smiling sunshine and the countless
lives

Of happy birds and insects see they not;
They have no faith in home's contented
wives,

Or husbands, both in palace, and in
cot!

It may be on their defective eye
Large things make no impressions—but
float by

Their sight, as things they cannot under-
stand,

Or that they seem as shadows on the
land.

There are those, we all know, that are too
keen

On some fair path to throw foul slander's
mud,

To note a blemish upon beauty's scene—
The worm that coils within the rose's
bud.

For envy enters largely into souls
Of such poor things as these, and they
would fain

Win, without labour — others' arduous
goals,

Eschewing aught that bringeth toil, or
pain!

IDOLS OF CLAY.

AYE! in this life how often shall we
find

The idols we have "set up" are but
clay!

Yet by a thousand ties our souls we bind
To them, as for their faithful love we
prayer!

We sacrifice our sweet pursuits to them,
We crown them even with a priceless
crown;

We place upon the breast of each a gem,
With foolish worship at their feet fall
down!

We shape by theirs our actions in this life;
Their words of folly we as wisdom
greet;

We fly from peace and we engage in strife,
Whene'er we hear *their* drums to battle
beat.

We gather of the fruit that they select,
As of the sweetest, fairest of our years;
With roses that *they* choose our bowers
are decked,

Our trust is weakened not by haunting
fears.

O! could such trust but last unto the *end*,
Life often, it might be, were less
oppressed;

A calmer road on earth we then might
wend—

But—at the last—would it be noble rest?

A SIREN;

OR,

A "DARK" NATURE.

SHE was as a corpse-candle—bright to see!
As fair fruit growing on a rotten tree;
As robes of beauty veiling breasts of sin,
As roses with a maggot's brood within.

For ever turning drearily away
From all the sweet and honest light of
day,

Wandering far into quagmires—where the
breath

Was hot with sin, or icy cold with
death!

O! seeming-tender lips, whose every word
Was of the gentlest tones e'er heard;

O cheeks, so sweetly, softly touched with
bloom,

O heart—filled with the foulness of the
tomb!

Aye! if a noble spirit should be led
To worship her, 'twas not her fault, she
said!

'Twas not *her* hand that drew a face so
fair,

With such charmed features and such
glorious hair!

She said that none had right to call her
vain—

She vowed she of her beauty made no
boast!

One might as well of some fair land com-
plain,

Because rash vessels struck upon its
coast!

ALAS! "DARKER AND DARKER
STILL!"

There is a woman—known to some too
well,

Of whom such speak with hate, or dreary
mirth,

Sent up by Satan from the depths of
Hell,

Who seeketh out the sweeter spots of
earth,

With the one evil task before her set

To lure all feeble souls into *his* net!

Not lovely is she, yet with wondrous eyes,

Such as to mortal rarely given before,
That bring men down—down to her knees,
to rise

As innocent and stainless souls no more,
And knowing later—but *too late*—that

they,
Kneeling to her to Satan fell a prey!

She rose from depths of Hell—and there
may be

More in this than our finite eyes can
see;

Something of good to be educed may still
Lie at the root of greatest *seeming* ill!

The wherefore know we not—yet this be-
lieve,

Lest through our days on earth as fools
we grieve;

Mysteries these are—unfathomably deep—

Such as on earth in vain we seek to
read;

And men may curse and women moan and
weep,

But never here to probe them shall
succeed!

MODERN BABYLON.

TO THOSE WHO WOULD FAIN DESTROY
IT!

THEY call thee "Modern Babylon"—!
the "sink

Of wickedness!" and yet ignoble souls
Are theirs, who not of charity can think,

Or ever e'en have known, those noble
goals

That others work for underneath a veil
Of gloom, though none may know the
gracious tale!

This do we know, that noble hearts do
beat

Within thy smoke-grimed walls, O
mighty town;

That many worn and yet unwearied feet,
Each passing day, before the sun goes
down,

Wear, with right saintly errands, those
old stones,

O'er which the Pharisee so "sweetly
groans"!

Yet some still speak of thee as though no
moss

Could grow within thy walls except the
moss of sin—

That they are clothed as with "infernal
dress"!

And only echo back Hell's fiendish din!
Theirs is an ignorance—of shameful kind,
Whose eyes, through gross uncharity, are
blind!

LINES TO MY OLD GOLD WATCH!
A WORK OF "MODERN BABYLON."

THOU'RT thirty years old, my brave gold
watch, I know,

Yet rarely a minute art too fast, or slow;
And I would, oh! I would, that *I* could
say as much,

But still—I am *not* hurt, like thee, by a
touch!

Good watch!—thou art far more true than
many a friend,

This lesson hath Dame Experience well
taught me!

And I've faith that thy faithfulness will
find no end
Save that which our common Father—
Time—hath brought *me!*

For thy wheels will run down some day—
so will mine!
And thy little steps no longer will ring
clear,
And the gold upon thy back will lose its
shine,
Ere thou, like the rest of us, close thy
career!

Thou hast always, good friend, had my
listening ear!
Of many a heart-beat of mine, too,
thou could'st tell;
Thou hast slept beneath my pillow, year
by year,
And hast only failed me when not
treated well!

A varied life hath been thine, now spent
in town,
And now in the country, now by the
sea-shore,
And thou may'st tick on, when *my* wheels
run down,
And the beating of *my* heart is heard no
more!

TO —.

LET NOT THY LIPS WITH SCORN
ALONE BE CURLED.

DEAR!—if thou speakest loudly to the
world,
To "point the shame" of many a vile
career,
Let not thy lip with scorn alone be
curled,
Although to speak the truth thou shalt
not fear.

Aye! blame all evil with unflinching
blame,
Look with stern reprobation on the vile,
But let true love thy deepest worship
claim,
And weakness know thy ever-pitying
smile!

No! let none shut their eyes to earthly
love
Because hate strikes at her with blows
of might;
Nor mock we the fair planets set above
Because rude storms shall often rule the
night.

I would not disbelieve that fair, sweet
spring
And summer hold upon the earth their
reign,
Because the bitter winds of winter bring
Cold desolation to the wood and plain.

I will not—as, alas! do some—refuse
Credit to Heaven, because of Satan's
paths,
Nor the more thoughtful souls of earth
abuse,
Though reckless feet may steal beside
our hearths!

THEY SUM UP ALL OUR BATTLES
MAY HAVE COST, BUT NOT THE
GARLANDS OF THE DAYS OF
PEACE.

I KNOW not what this life can be on earth
To those who have no faith in Heaven
or Love!
Perchance a place of tears, or hollow
mirth,
More fitted for the mocking-bird than
dove!

The hours of such will but on self be
spent,
On bitter lamentations o'er their fate;
That they into a wilderness were sent
Only to fret o'er sorrow, war, and hate.

The bliss that yet is earthly, know they
not,
It is for them as undiscovered gems;
They only point out the fair fruits that
rot,
The roses that are dropping from their
stems.

They do not note the summer's loving
light,
The shadows that lie softly on the grass;

They but complain of bitter chills of
night,
Of storms that break the oak boughs as
they pass.

They only count the vessels that are lost,
The winds that blow, and not the winds
that cease;
And sum up all our battles may have cost,
But not the garlands of the days of
peace!

ONE—LOOKING BACK.

His path is tangled and his sky o'ercast,
He sits and grimly looks back on the past;
His brow is lined, his heart is growing
cold,
Dark sins have marked his path, though
sins untold.

This comforts little in these later days,
He careth less for men's unworthy praise;
He would that his own conscience could
but tell
That things with him had been but wise
and well.

Now that temptation is no longer hot,
Now youth's fierce vagaries disturb him
not,
He marvels at the wrong that he hath
done,
The evil webs that were in darkness spun.

And loathes that sin that cost his soul so
much,
Those joys that turned to ashes at his
touch;
Those flowers that withered at his burning
breath,
Whose dust alone, to him, is worse than
death.

His lessons have, alas! too late been
learnt,
Deeply their brand upon his brow is
burnt;
Yes! lessons scoffed at in the hour of
grace—
Can there be still for him in Heaven a
place?

O LOVE—THE STRONG THINGS THOU HAST DONE!

O NOBLE LOVE! *the strong things thou
hast done.*

From Life's first dawn until these later
times!

The many races thy swift feet have run,
Through countless seasons, places, ages,
climes!

O wisest Love!—the lessons thou hast
taught!

To such as choose to hearken to thy
voice;

O fearless Love!—the battles thou hast
fought,

Of sore necessity, and not from choice.

O tender Love!—the grief that thou hast
stilled,

When artless ones by foes have been
betrayed—

Aye tender Love!—the hearts that thou
hast thrilled,

The restless death-beds thou hast peace-
ful made!

O happy Love!—the rapture thou can'st
give,

The taste of Heaven thy tones have
proffered here;

The homes of joy in which thy children
live,

If yet but brief ones in this mortal
sphere;

O exquisite and perfect Love!—thine eyes
Are as the stars set in the heaven's
fair space;

The young—the true—the noble and the
wise,

Kneel at thy feet, and pray thee for thy
grace!

O LOVE! THE BATTLES THOU HAST FOUGHT!

AGAIN—O Love — the battles thou hast
fought!

They are beyond my lips to praise, I
know;

Nor, truly, can I thank thee as I ought,
That thou hast shown what faith still
dwells below.

Aye! thou hast proved that they but falsely
speak

Who say thou now art driven from our
plains,
That thou for other spheres hast left our
bleak,
Cold world, that here at last, thy planet
wanes.

No! I believe them not! for I have heard
Full oft thy songs within this world
of ours;
Has not my heart so thrillingly been
stirred,
That I would fain have crowned thy
brow with flowers?

Love! truly there are some thou can'st
not know;
Thou would'st be but as sweet things
to an ass—

As worthless pebbles, not as pearls of snow,
As tainted streams that through rank
meadows pass.

Thou may'st not care to visit the poor
homes
Whose inmates speak of thee as one
long dead;

Yet! shall the swallow, when no summer
comes,
Fear that its glory is for ever fled?

TO —.

SWEET! now the rage of spite hath some-
what passed,
And one hears but the muttering of the
blast,
One can rest calmly under sunset's skies,
And view the past with only memories'
sighs.

Trouble not over the mean things of earth,
They cannot lessen thy more sterling
worth;
He showeth he is wise, thoughtful, and
strong,
Who shall not, uselessly, grieve over
wrong!

A walk across the plains of laval heat,
Needs bring much sorrow to all tender feet,
'Twere simpler far to walk where all is fair,
Telling of hope, of culture, and of care!

But weakly citizen of earth is he,
Who anything of hatefulness shall see,
And feels he cannot "buckle to" and stay
The evil that impedes his onward way!

AH! SISTERS DEAR.

AH! Sisters dear — I pleading for you
often*
Have told of many fair sweet truths to
soften
The bitter taunts that through pale Envy's
sting,
Some tongues ignoble shall against ye
bring!

True—"there are women and women"—
some, alas!
Will scarcely even for "fallen angels"
pass;
That light and darkness oft have mingled
been,
Is still a truth by some dim eyes unseen!

The darkness all can see!!—some hearts,
I know,
Although impure, have yet the *chill* of
snow!
Hearts of which hatred hath the greatest
measure,
Who stab you *almost* with a throb of
pleasure!

Yet wherefore should this bitter knowledge
blind
Our eyes to the true spirits of our kind;
Make us refuse belief that in these days
Live those that even might win an angel's
praise!

The noble steps some mark on earth
e'en now—
The glow that shines on many a woman's
brow—
The bright, fair crown of courage, love,
and glory,
Can find no sting in Envy's vulgar story!

* See "Versus a Woman, pro Women."

YES—THOUGH A "FEEBLE WOMAN"!

YES! *though* a woman, I was not afraid!
A "feeble woman"! yet was not dismayed,
Even by a flood of fierce abuse one day
Poured by soured lips and pens upon my way.*

I *knew* my cause was good, and felt no fear,
Though angry winds went whistling by
mine ear;
And shrilly, witch-like voices, ringing past,
Made often hideous the noon-tide blast.

Nay! there were busy hours when yet I
paused
With something of surprise and more
disdain,
To think of all the tumult I had caused,
To the unworthy soul and bitter brain.

Not for one *single moment* have I swerved
From that first path I marked out for
my tread,
Not for one single moment been unnerved
By falsehoods that were thickly round
me spread.

No! I had been ashamed if I could turn
From any path that I esteemed of
worth,
Through stabs made in the dark, though
one needs learn
The vileness of *some* footsteps on this
earth.

But footsteps in the track of Death! the
tears
We o'er them shed through many passing
years!
Aye! these we cannot help who walk the
paths
Of earth and sit beside her rifled hearths!

A FATIGUING SPORT!

To "shoot at Folly as it flies" is not
The easy task that it to some may
seem;

Now is it lost in a fair-seeming spot,
And proved as shiftY as a moonlit
dream;
Is now a mote that blinds our sickly eyes,
And now a giant darkening our sweet
skies.

As a chameleon it can change its hue—
A sportive demon, it reshapes its shape—
Now as a holy vestal meets our view,
Now as the Queen of Love its limbs
will drape;
Now choosing one and now another form,
Now robed for pleasure—now again for
storm.

To each shall it appear in different guise,
To some as singer of a merry strain,
To some it hath the mien of being wise,
Proclaiming all things of the earth are
vain;
To all is but an *ignis fatuus* light,
That leads the fool to follow into night.

MISTAKEN OBJECTS IN DOING GOOD.

WRONG from the first—yes! from the very
first,
Wrong in all practice, creed, and ex-
pectation!
He *may* in danger be of being cursed
Who liveth *only* for his own salvation!

And yet he may go forth amongst the sick,
And lift them out of poverty and dirt;
And even venture where the fight is thick,
But caring chiefly that he gets no hurt!

Yes! seeks to lessen the amount of sin
In any cot, in any sufferer's home,
But doing simply this that he may win,
His fullest payment in the world to
come!

Neither for charity, neither for God,
He takes what seemingly are paths of
right;
But only for himself these paths are trod,
Therefore, shall they but lead him into
night!

* (See p. 31). Not only publicly but by numbers of private letters! after publishing "Versus a Woman, pro Women."

Yes! wrong!—wrong even from the very first—

Wrong in all practice, creed, and expectation!

He *may* in danger be of being cursed,
Who liveth only for his own salvation!

A LETTER TO —.

IN ANSWER TO ONE FULL OF MISINFORMATION.

My Friend, write not to me as unto one
Still “wearying” beneath this earthly sun;
The while no longer dark with heavy woes,
My day is fair, from sunrise to its close.

The light rests on me of a clear sunset,
And *for myself* I nothing have to grieve,
Although for others I may sorrow, yet
I know the gentle comfort of the eve!

Truly my days are calm—excepting when
Some bitter memories cross the tender shade

Of those who walked the way of evil men
And women—and who slandered and betrayed:

Who insults heaped upon my saddest days,
Whose eyes, malicious, I no more will meet;

Now—when the sun shines softly on my ways,
Now—when the air is soft, the flowers are sweet,

I have for these a loathing that debars
All possibility of friendship more;
There wander few more base beneath the stars,
Their days of clasping hands with me are o’er.

LETTER TO A FRIEND.

Yes! I have been, through many of life’s
later days,
What some have chosen to call a “stay-at-home!”

Loving the simpler paths of homely ways,
Not anxious into the world’s glare to come!

But still I like to see the faces—much—
Of mankind, and to note what life hath taught

To them, — their hands, when true and strong,
to touch—

Still more, to reach their deeper wells of thought.

To interchange true sentiment is well,
Albeit with a stranger or a neighbour;
Also to garner knowledge, and to tell
What *thou* hast learnt—*this* is not wasted labour!

I treasure many tales of human life,
I love to listen to the echoing cries
Of those that shall engage in active strife,
Awaking the proud echoes of the skies.

So do I love the hours of studious ease,
When I upon a happier world may dream,
And hear the nightingale amongst the trees,
And see the moon upon the ocean beam.

COUNSELS.

SEEST thou not there shall be occasions
when

Thou can’st not speak all that is in thy mind;

Lest thou bring wolves out from some secret den,

Ere thou a fitting weapon for them find!

“Let sleeping dogs lie,” it is often said,
Nor rouse them that thou fain would’st ride “tantivy,”

Bring not the shark out of his ocean bed,
Nor the ill-omened owlet from the ivy—

Let hornets in their secret nests abide:

Awaken not the viper in his hole;

Loosen not boulders on the mountain side,
Or death may follow as they downward roll.

Yet let no mists obscure a careless sight,

Kill thou that viper, if upon thy way;

Watch that the wolf prowls not abroad at night,

Lest he of thy loved ones makes his prey.

But give some even pleasant, gracious
hours,
To the sweet blossoms that thy garden
yields,
See that the fruit is cared for in thy
bowers,
And that the grain is garnered from thy
fields.

ENCOUNTERED ON EARTH.

AYE! selfish natures one may sometimes
meet,
Who, of compassion, nothing seem to
know;
They walk the earth with ever-selfish feet,
They have no faith in deep, heartrending
woe.

For pity on their thoughts hath little claim,
And rarely sympathy shines from their
eyes;
They look on sorrow with the frown of
blame,
Their ears are closed to all her piteous
cries.

Only for self they feel—to this they give
All that may be of tender in their
hearts!

Yet wonder any on this earth shall live,
Who acts to them their own once bitter
parts!

They go on through their little round 'of
years,
Nor turn one moment from their trivial
way.

To show compassion for another's tears,
Or for another's welfare pause to pray.

Having no depth of heart, they can believe
But in a superficial grief at most;
And sceptical of those that deeply grieve,
They of their own superior courage
boast!

HIS CARES WERE FOR HIMSELF ALONE.

His cares were for himself—himself
alone;
He did not stay to hear the widow's moan,

But harshly bade her keep her sorrows
down,
And turned away with a repellent frown.

Like the Athenians, in the days of old,
He cared not that the winds were sharp
and cold,
He cared not that the tempests might
increase,
So they touched not *his* comfort, or *his*
peace.

The end of all his toil—and the First
Cause
Was — a fierce craving for the world's
applause!
To win approval, even from strangers'
eyes,
The most desired and the most boasted
prize!

So trod he not in life's more troubled ways,
For fear lest never sycophantish praise,
The little trumpets blown for little wars,
Should waft his *vulgar* smallness to the
stars!

They who shrink from the shadows of our
woes,
Who wear the night-cap of a mean repose,
Who sinners—strut, as though unstained
by sin,
Wear not the crowns that meeker souls
shall win.

TO A LOST LADY FRIEND.

I WOULD that there were more like thee
on earth,
Or, rather, what *thou wert*—gentle, yet
so calmly wise,
With all faith in the great world's wealth
of worth,
So broadly spread beneath these modern
skies!
Yet, one must look both far and wide, I
fear,

Ere we another like to thee shall find—
Whose outlook was so tender and so
clear,
Who had so warm a heart—so *sweet* a
mind!

Aye! were there more like thee!—a friend
so true

And faithful—never tired of doing well;
Poor mortals *then* might take a brighter
view

Of life, and sweeter tales rejoice to tell;
There would not be that dreary number,
then,

That some delight to count up, in these
days,

Of foolish women, of ignoble men,
Of weakly steps that tread the coward's
ways!

For there are some alas! too well we know,
Such as to earth were born from ancient
times,

Whose eyes do never look for joy, but
woe,

Who reckon not men's virtues, but their
crimes!

Of all such darkling souls I would beware—
They fill earth's loftiest spirits with
despair!

PHILOSOPHY!

AH! Life shall teach in lessons hard and
stern,

Not only speak to thee of strength in
sorrow;

A darker lesson thou from it may'st learn,
Not such as thou can'st *quite* dismiss
to-morrow!—

If it to thee the true and faithful shows,
The sympathiser with thy pains and
fears,

The gentle, loving sharer of thy woes,
The kindly—who shall weep with thee
thy tears.

So shall it, also, show the hardened heart,
Whose blows of scorn no words of pity
stay,

The seeming friends that from thy side
depart

The moment sunlight fades upon thy
way!

So shall it show to thee what faces wear
And *smilingly*, the mask of mean
deceit;

So shall it show thee many a vulgar snare,
That some delight to spread around thy
feet.

Treasure them all—these lessons! every
one

May useful be—if even sore and sad;
Yes! ere thy chequered race on earth is
run,

Thou may'st, for each and all of them,
be glad!

GO STEADILY THY WAY AND LAUGH AT FEAR.

THE nearer you are to Fame's lofty
height,

They say, denser the clouds that roll
around!

But though these clouds may hide the fair
and bright,

Yet do they often rise from lower ground.

They are not clouds from Heaven—oh,
no! but clouds

That from unhealthy, evil vales arise,
And cling around the mountain's form as
shrouds

And winding-sheets, and hide the smiling
skies!

Yet fear thou not, dear friend, the time
may come,

When thou shalt look up into a bright
dome,

And note the air is beautiful and clear—
Go steadily thy way, and laugh at fear!
Although bleak winds may work on thee
their will,

And snow may drift against thy garments
—still,

Fear not—look up to Heaven from time to
time,

Pray that be shown to thee the way to
climb;

The weak shall fail—the strong will conquer.
So—

The peak is reached, the plains lie veiled
below!

LINES TO —.

CONCERNING AN INCIDENT IN THE
SPRING OF 1888.*

AYE! the "fierce light" that on a throne
may beat,
Sometimes appeareth but to point out
blight;
Not always does it show men's eyes the
sweet,
The rose's glowing hue, the snowdrop's
white.

Truly it may fall upon unpleasant matter,
Such as may cause a laugh, a sneer, a
chatter
Of lips that are ignoble, mean or idle,
From those whose curious tongues can
nothing bridle!

A queen can't even eat a little fruit,
But Gossip thinks the fact *her* book may
suit!

A queen may'nt even amongst the tomb-
stones muse,
But Gossip makes it "her own piece of
news!"*

Yet has it not been often wisely said,
That he who walking calmly down a
lane
May hear vile insults levelled at his head,
Had best walk on, nor turn that head
again.

And if ill-luck should land you in a place
Devoid of cleanliness and every grace,
Would you stay *there*, a foul-tongued one
to chide?

Nay! *here* 'twere well to seek "the other
side!"

This also bear in mind—that you fear not
To *seem* to join the Pharisee's mean lot;
If you fear *this*, friend, it were well to
speak—

To save the blush of shame from your own
cheek—

About the deadly meanness of the ways
Followed by Pharisees of modern days!

MUSING.

ON CERTAIN SELF-MADE JUDGES OF
THEIR KIND.

FULL often, looking o'er life's chequered
plains,
One meets with those
Whose blood flows sluggishly through
feeble veins,
Who, wrapt in dull repose,
Yet deem themselves superlatively fit
Upon the judge's honoured throne to sit;
Who pass grim verdicts on some brother's
fall,
And dare themselves superior souls to
call.

"How *could* he steal?" one often hears
it said,
With brows uplifted, when some wretch
is caught
Purloining bread;
"Unto what vile condition seems he
brought!"
Nor often deem they why their hands are
white,
Because they've lived in ease through all
their years,
Sheltered from storms and shrinking from
all fight,
Fears of their kind often their sharpest
fears;
Obedient to their fellow creatures' laws,
They live for man's and not for God's
applause.

REMINDERS—

FOR UNJUST JUDGES.

A NOBLE calm shall fill the heart of him
Who hath not been an unjust judge of
men;
Although his vision may on earth be dim,
And there is much that lies beyond his
ken,
And much that is concealed by storm and
gloom,
Yet shall he treasure all of health and
bloom!

* Readers of the daily papers will understand these allusions!

Much joy is his who noteth the fair light
That shineth on earth's many happy
isles;

The stars that break through even the
darkest night,

The angry tempests changing into
smiles;

The mighty winds of southern regions die,
Or sink down into a repentant sigh.

He seeth in all things the best—not worst—
Although he also needs, through life to
know

That some seem sentenced but to be
accursed,

To suffer degradation's meanest woe;
While others lift up gladly the sweet voice
Of gratitude, that all souls may rejoice,
And feel, despite much shadow and sad
blight,

What fair flowers blossom in Heaven's
open light,

To cheer, if only with a transient glow,
The varied homes that mortals form below.

A LETTER TO —.

No one can do his duty and remain
By foes, by bitter foes, here unassailed;
He who walks only on a level plain,
To scale great heights in life must needs
have failed!

Rebuke thou the dishonest man, the knave,
He henceforth will pursue thee with a
hate

That oft shall follow even to the grave,
Nay! that will go beyond its silent
gate!

That man who hath no enemies—still
more

That woman, shall be one who, faint
and weak,
Dares not remove one evil from life's
door,
Nor boldly even of its presence speak!

But he who shall assailed be by hateful
things,

Is one who will not shrink from pointing
out

A thousand insects of most poisoned stings,
That in some fair dominions flit about!

For henceforth he will ever followed be
In every path of his, and made to
bleed;

And on all things of his your eyes may
see

These shapes of envy, malice, hate will
feed!

This therefore know, that no brave soul
remains

By foes, by bitter foes, here unassailed;
He who walks only on life's level plains,
To scale great heights in life must needs
have failed.

TO A LOVELESS PILGRIM.

O! AN unhappy pilgrim thou, of earth,
Who hath no knowledge of the grace of
love!

What evil star arose upon thy birth,
To shed such light, malignant, from
above?

Unhappy pilgrim!—even unto the end
Of thy poor, worldly life—thou who
wert born

So mean that Love could not thy steps
befriend,

Nor ever smiled upon Youth's tender
dawn.

Unhappy pilgrim! never to thine ears
Will come the sweetest music hearts can
know;

Upon thy tomb shall fall no tender tears
Of love—and near thy grave no rose
shall blow.

Unhappy pilgrim—as a weed art thou,
A weed that is not beautiful or sweet;
That bears no flowers to twine around the
brow,

Or to grow smilingly about thy feet!

Unhappy pilgrim—on thy bowers by night,
The stars shall never shine with that fair
light

That falleth from the summer-midnight
skies,

Into a lover's soft, uplifted eyes!

LET THE DEAD REST.

If good thou can'st not speak, thou may'st
be still!

Tell never falsehood, even of the dead;
But if his paths in life were paths of ill,
Be thy tongue silent, lest should lies
be said!

For if what is not truth thy lips shall
speak,

It shall bring shame to others as to
thee;

And if thou hast thyself a brazen cheek,
That brazen cheek may not for *others*
be!

Thou bringest up remembrances of wrong,
And of ill deeds that had far better
slept,

Slept with the dead!—thus waking a sad
song,

And memories of the failings some had
wept!

Let the dead rest—and let their follies
pass

From earth—Alas! for them it might be
well

Could we erase them from stern memory's
glass,

So that she never could their darkness
tell!

Let the dead rest—"forgotten"—so "for-
given"!

These two are oft as one!—and hand in
hand

(Save when apart by flash of memory
riven)

May walk unto the end Earth's troubled
land.

ON HEALTHY REPROOF!

THE voice that hath controlled the vexed
or proud,

Is not of blustering accents, not even
loud;

Alas! that voice, that is so seldom heard,
Is one that speaks the firm but gentle
word.

"I've reason to be angry"—comes instead,
As words by which a wrangle shall be
ended;

And less with pain and sorrow is this
said

Than in the haughty tones of one—
offended!

'Tis true there *are* occasions when one
needs

Speak plainly, and with warm, indignant
feeling,

And sometimes, if an angry bosom bleeds,
It bleeds to its own wholesomeness and
healing.

The strong words of sound *truth* come as
the wind,

That sweeps away foul mists from low-
land plains,

And passing on its way shall leave behind
Only the healthy grass, that still
remains!

For health dwells not in dull and stagnant
air,

The constant grumblings of our "ne'er-
do-wells,"

Full of their losses, failures, and despair,
Are almost dreary as funereal bells!

A LETTER TO —.

HOW FRIENDS MAY BE FAILURES.

THAT early friends turn out so false is
less

Our fault than our misfortune, one
reflects!

The qualities that hurt or those that bless,
Some passing fancy, or mere chance
selects!

Not age, nor wisdom, first directs our
choice,

We see the surface, but peer not below!

Nay! it may be we raised not even our
voice,

But just *received* "an *offered* gift," you
know!

So often "friends" are failures, much we
fear,

Or if they *once* were everything we
thought them,

They change, through changes in their
own career,
Or through what some experience hath
taught them.

A matron is, we know, no thoughtless
girl,
Her life is ruled by other thoughts and
laws,
And one may find what *once* we thought a
pearl,
A thing of imitation—spoilt by flaws.

The lesson of this life she wrongly read;
The brow is harshly and not gently
lined;
And wisdom crowneth not *that* now bent
head,
Nor tender love warms longer *that* dull
mind!

YOUTH GOES ITS WAY WITH BUT A THOUGHTLESS TREAD.

YOUTH goes its way with but a thought-
less tread,
Enters on unknown paths with little dread,
Through unown meadows, singing, will
it pass,
Nor fears the adders veiled by bending
grass,
Fondly in summer's glowing rose believes,
Nor looks to find a wasp among the
leaves.

It gives its trust to untrustworthy friends,
On loud professions, easily depends!
Looks with warm faith into unfaithful eyes,
And credits not the fatal ease of lies,
The many shifts of a poor, envious breast,
The hatreds that some mean careers
infest.

Therefore youth's heart is open to the
blows
Dealt by false friends—the sharpest of all
foes,
By which shall envy its vile purpose serve.
Yes, gives its confidence without reserve,
To learn, in after years, a sheet of snow,
May often hide a festering corpse below!

TO —.

THINK! was it well, now that the years
have passed,
Each with some weary sorrow in its
train,
Going towards Futurity, that vast
And unknown land men long to know
in vain;
Oh, was it well that thou should'st have
elected
To tread that path that thou hast made
thine own,
With eyes to darkness, not to light
directed,
Casting at all within thy reach a stone,
And boasting, as thou marchest o'er life's
plain,
Thy hands, *thy* heart, alone, are pure
from stain?

Think what it had been were thy words
but kind
And pitiful—being thyself of those
To whose good works thou hast appeared
so blind,
While so forgetful of their griefs and
woes;
Their patient steps — the many noble
deeds
The strong soul doeth, though the tired
hand bleeds:
Remember the weak back, bent down with
pain,
That yet to carry heavy weights will
strain!

Look to the silver lining of the cloud,
Not to the shadow it may sometimes
throw;
Listen not only when the wind is loud,
And when o'er only bleak wastes it may
blow—
Thy heart is blighted by its bitter
dreams.
Attend not only to destructive streams,
But hearken to the rivulet's glad voices.
Know—he on earth is blessed that he re-
joices!
Have faith that paths that mortal footsteps
trod
Oft led them up from Earth unto Earth's
God!

NEVER MORE!

How little in early life we dream
Of what these words may cost us!
"Never more!"

A passing phrase — *that only* — it may
seem;
Less than—a past no future shall restore.

Little, alas! of what it means we feel,
And use it, sometimes, more than half
in jest;

For with the future we too lightly deal,
And are content it shall in shadow rest.

Ah!—*Never more!* yet on this life we
gaze,

To count its weeks, its months, even its
years,

As of a certain number of mixed days
Of likely, or impossible careers.

That we have parted—parted, and for ever,
From those we may in earlier times
have met,

That in *one moment* every link we sever,
And in the future pray but to forget!

Aye! that it is, in truth, a knell that tolls
The death of friendship, is not felt by
those

Who live the life of hasty, selfish souls,
Neglecting wisdom until life shall close.

Thus—little in our early days we dream
Of what those words may cost us—
"Never more!"

A passing phrase—that *then* to us may
seem

Less than — *A past no future shall
restore!*

LESSONS OF LIFE.—I.

THE fond beliefs of youth's unswerving
trust

In mere professions of some oily lips;
The faith in metals that no damp shall
rust;

The pride in our own clumsy, home-
made ships;

The certainty *our* spring shall ne'er be sad,
And that *our* summer shall be full of
joy,

That even our days of winter shall be glad,
That Death, alone, our pleasures can
destroy;—

The trust that as we gaily sow our seeds,
They shall come up as flowers—in the
hereafter;

The eyes aghast with which we find them
weeds—

These things might fill a cynic's soul with
laughter!

For each believes that it shall be *his* lot
To be a wiser sower than his neighbours;
So gaily soweth he, and doubteth not
But that kind Heaven (or luck!) will
bless his labours!

Men think not here, that we need learn
from others;

On hill, or plain, we tread the well-
worn way;

The Pharisee shall still rebuke his brothers,
And think himself more sure of Heaven
than they!

LESSONS OF LIFE.—II.

O! THROUGH this life how often shall we
find

The idols we have set up are but clay,
Although by sacred links our souls we
bind

To them, and warmly for their friendship
pray!

The hand of earnest faith we yield to them,
Each brow with wreaths of our own
making crown;

We place upon the breast of each a gem,
And with warm worship on our knees
fall down.

We walk in paths made by but foolish
feet;

We turn from peace to enter into strife,
Whene'er we hear their drum to battle
beat,

That we may share the conflicts of their
life.

We take of many things that they select,
 As of the sweetest of the passing years;
 With gifts from them our brows we gladly
 deck,
 Our hearts are shadowed not by doubts
 or fears!

O! could such faith but last unto the end,
 Life might be far less heavy and op-
 pressed—
 Nor need we from worn paths our foot-
 steps bend
 Towards the last home of silence and of
 rest!

HATE VERSUS LOVE.

"HATE is a passion stronger far than
 Love,"
*Some say, and dominates o'er man more
 surely!*
 'Tis not a spirit sent us from *above*,
 But one that comes from darker regions
 purely!

Hate has the fiercer, more relentless will,
 A wider sway, in action, you may find;
 One weakly disbelieves in this until
Experience forces it upon the mind!

Love, even, hath been often slain by Hate,
 Who is a murderer of the deepest dye—
 A power as Lucifer, most foully great,
 With mouth of malice and malignant
 eye.

But who shall prove to us when Love's
 sweet breath,
 Hath melted the fierce rancour of its
 foe,
 And saved it from that worst of roads to
 death,
 That passeth only through the plains of
 woe?

If this be done, 'tis rarely done, indeed!
 Love often faints, and, baffled, turns
 away,
 But if its heart at times shall sadly bleed,
 There *sometimes* dawns for it a glorious
 day.

But Hate! it passeth downward to its
 doom,
 And oft to this a maddened way it takes,
 And sleeps at last in a detested tomb,
 There guarded by a very hell of snakes!

HIDDEN SEEDS!

HATE—yes! from sources often veiled it
 springs,
 Like very poison through some veins it
 spreads,
 Like the most noxious of earth's spreading
 things,
 It makes itself a thousand unseen beds.

Its strong, its acrid rootlets are so deep
 No one can see the soil wherein they
 grow;
 Its arms spread upwards to the loftiest
 steep,
 Its leaves conceal the evil pools below.

'Tis not alone, this "poison in the
 veins,"
 It chills the flesh with even a deadly
 cold,
 Wherever it hath been, by loathsome
 stains
 Its evil progress hath been grimly told.

A glamour Hate o'er many souls may cast,
 And most o'er those with mean and
 feeble eyes;
 These to the light are blinded to the last,
 Their owners ne'er shall be "as serpents
 wise"!

Such are the seeds the evil like to sow,
 That needs produce the Devil's chosen
 fruits;
 If any seek the reasons *why* these grow,
 Those reasons 'scape the keenest of
 pursuits!

GENIUS AND MADNESS.

"Great wits to madness nearly are allied."

NAY! is it not they soar into bright
 realms,
 Filled with new scenery—with more
 glowing thought,

The light of which another's mind o'er-
whelms,
The words of which seem to the weak
distraught?

What men can understand not, they declare
Allied to madness—'tis what they *would*
read,
But find shall only bring them to despair!
Ah! thus they found on this an empty
creed!

So was it, in the early days of earth,
So, in a different measure, still must be;
He is a mark—yes, even a thing for mirth—
Who, beyond others, into Heaven shall
see?

They—who can understand—his words may
read;
To others they will seem a tongue un-
known!
A senseless, even a mysterious creed,
A strain—of which they know not even
a tone!

MYSTERIOUS WHISPERS.

O! IF thy soul is far above the herd,
Thou sittest on a height to them un-
known;
The air is by a thousand voices stirred,
That whisper to your ears, but yours
alone!

They that hear not the murmurs that
thou hearest,
Know nothing of the mysteries that they
teach,
And of the sounds that to your ears are
clearest,
Not even the echoes their dull ears shall
reach.

Some hearts are choked with bitter plants
of rue,
And there are hearts that suffering
helpeth not;
A cloud the infinite conceals from view,
The thunder rolls but in a desert spot.

Imagination—Faith—is not for them—
They cannot see beyond their own field-
skies,

And Love itself is a mysterious gem,
Whose value sparkles not into their
eyes.

And what they know not—what they have
not—they
Believe not that another can possess!
Theirs—and theirs only, is the one true
way;
Theirs, and theirs only, are the hands
that bless!!

FATE'S UNEQUAL FAVOURS!

To some are many gifts—to some but few,
Some are endued from birth with
feeblest powers;
Yet skies that are of most celestial blue,
Know the most gloomy and tempestuous
hours!

The fruits that are the richest, the most
fair,
The flowers that are the sweetest and
most bright,
Require the tender hand of loving care,
To save them from the cruel breath of
blight.

So when they saw "her" hand was strong,
and reached
Some tempting prizes that beyond them
lay,
Of their unwholesome tastes they loudly
preached,
Of hollow Vanity! of Life's decay!

Therefore, they hated her, with bitter
hate;
To be *superior* seems, to some, so
wrong!
They *smaller* show, where others shine as
great,
They *weaker* seem, when others are
so strong.

Still the old fable of the grapes repeats!
And there is nothing new beneath the
sun,
And one extremity the other meets,
And some must lose the race that others
won!

A PLEASANT RECOLLECTION.

AH! I remember well that night —
although

It now is of the realms of "Long ago!"
The clear and ringing plaudits—and the sea
Of eager faces all upturned—to me!

Yet—at the moment I saw not those faces!
Mine eyes seemed looking out upon strange
places—

A spell seemed at that moment to have
bound me—

Pale soldiers—smoking cannon—seemed
around me.*

So was I thinking—even as that note,
That high and clear "*B naturel*" I drew!
Whose sound seemed o'er the listeners'
heads to float,

Until a very storm of *bravos* grew.

And then an arm was round me, and a
strong,

Kind pressure bore me rapidly along,
And I felt faint—lights round me seemed
to swim—

The brilliant audience faded and grew dim.

Even when I went out into the calm street,
We heard the *encores* and applauding feet;
Strangely they sounded in that midnight
air—

The quiet moonlight—silent thoroughfare!

Yes! I remember well that night, although
It now is in the realms of "Long ago"—
The clear and ringing plaudits and the sea,
Of eager faces all upturned—to me!

YES! STRANGELY BRIGHT!

Yes! strangely bright even now appear
those hours,

The long division between "then" and
"now,"

When I stood crowned by *stephanotis*
flowers,

Placed by a loving hand upon my brow.

Fair, ever, the past vision of that night,
Whose joy was heaped up in so full a
measure;

A page in life both beautiful and bright;
So full of innocent, if brilliant, pleasure.

God gave the gift of voice—there is no
gift

So full of pure and of untarnished bliss,
That seems so thrillingly the soul to lift
Into a more melodious world than this.

For even through song the soul shall find
its way,

Fair realms beyond this earth of ours to
reach;

Into a sweeter realm than this to stray,
And with a sweeter and a fuller speech.

It is beyond the simple gift of tongue,
Something seems in it even of Divine;
I have looked into Heaven as I have sung.
And I thought I saw there angels' faces
shine.

LETTERS OF DEPARTED
YEARS.

It sometimes grieves — like looking on
dead faces,

To read the letters of departed years;
Thereon so many painful lines one traces,
Recalling poor, or darkly-closed careers.

Note we this scrawl!—what foolish coun-
sels here!

And what wild charges blemish every
line—

What vile attacks on all that one holds
dear,

Or that by glow of tender memories
shine!

Aye! what false counsels! Had I followed
these,

I might as well my soul have given back
Into the realms of unread mysteries,
Leaving untrodden life's yet early track!

* At the time of the Crimean War, one of the plans for raising funds to help the sick and wounded was the giving of semi-private Amateur Concerts in which men and women of rank took part. In one of these, given at the "Beethoven Rooms," the part assigned to Mrs. Dobell was the singing of Adolph Adams' famous "Variations on 'Ah! vous dirai-je.'" It is to this occasion that these and the following verses refer. See p. 5, "Mrs. Horace Dobell at Home."

Cast these into the fire—let the bright
flashes

Of leaping flames be all that shall
remain;

Forget—even as thou lookest on their
ashes,

The hours they brought thee once of
grief and pain.

Keep, if thou keepest any, records sweet
Of friendship's true and unexact ways,
Or those that echoes bring of Love's fair
feet,

Wandering through starlit groves in
earlier days!

LINES WRITTEN VERY LONG AGO.

I KNOW that thou wilt do thy duty—dear!
Not only when the skies are fair and
clear,

But when thy atmosphere is full of rain,
And mists lie heavily upon the plain.

Oft have the tempests angry been, but
thou

Hast a brave heart and an unflinching
brow,

And with that ever clear and thoughtful
brain,

Art never one to foolishly complain.

Yet have thy labours, dear, been often
hard,

Thy fair, young hand, it may be, now is
scarred,

Thy feet oft growing weary ere the night,
So thou did'st dread the morn's returning
light.

God for the brave hath pity—soon the
day

May brighten and the dark clouds roll
away,

And calm upon thy path descend, and rest
Take up her habitat in thy tired breast.

POSTSCRIPT.

(Dated September, 1887.)

Yes! thou did'st bravely do thy duty, dear,
Not only when the skies were fair and
clear,

But when the atmosphere was full of rain,
And mists lay heavily upon the plain.

AUTUMN EVENINGS.

O AUTUMN! Autumn! as thy leaves are
falling,

I wander out into thy purple light,
And hear the sea-gulls to each other
calling,

Across the sea, their wild notes of
"Good-night!"

O Autumn! Autumn! with thy fading
roses,

Thy wild flowers in our every field-path
dying,

Thy pale-blue mountain that the mist en-
closes,

Thy sombre wood wherein the winds are
sighing.

O Autumn, Autumn! with thy flocks of
birds,

Now flying inland from the bleaker
shores,

And with thy silent, discontented herds,
That wander grimly o'er the fog-damp
moors.

O Autumn! Autumn! with thy unclothed
trees,

That throw but pallid shadows on the
grass,

That lift complaining voices when the
breeze,

And fitful lightning through their
branches pass.

O Autumn! Autumn! sadder, year by
year,

Fuller of memories—memories that are
grey;

O Autumn! Autumn! blistered by each
tear

That falls on new-made graves upon thy
way!

VIOLET:

AN EPITAPH.

PERFECT and holy had been her sweet
life,

As *little child*, as daughter, loving wife
And mother—full of pity and of love;

Pray God that we may meet her yet once
more;

O! and for ever! in the realms above,
When earthly grief and suffering are
o'er!

Pure, holy, gentle—everywhere forgetting
Her sorrows in the woes by others borne;
Never impatient, peevish, idly fretting,
Her heart by no unhappy passions torn;
Hopeful and trustful and compassionate,
Trusting to God—*content* to trust and wait.

Thoughtful as tender — far beyond her
years,
Giving to others' griefs her warm, young
tears,
Yet with a ready smile for each fair day,
She went upon her calm and saintly way!
God took her all too soon for us, whose
eyes
Now wait to greet her in eternal skies.

AS A SEALED BOOK.

Aye! there are griefs that are as a sealed
book,
Whose every page was blistered once
with tears,
Nor wisely do we on those pages look
To read the records of our buried years!

Alas! this buried past—oh! who shall
dare
To take out from their sepulchres the
dead!
Beholding things that are no longer fair,
As in the days when those sad tears were
shed.

Who shall untie that faded bunch of
flowers,
Gift of a loved and loving hand now
cold—
Recalling raptures of long vanished hours,
Sweet tales that never now may be re-
told!

They are as ghosts—as shadows of the
past,
No more; and could they speak, their
tones would wring
The heart, and dark, unfathomed gloom
might cast
O'er all that earth reneweth of her
spring.

Go! let them rest—this life is all too brief
For o'er-indulgence of a wounded heart;
Close of that book each rashly opened leaf,
And bid the ghosts of other days depart!

GO! WHAT HAST THOU TO DO WITH ME!

"COME thou my way and I will comfort
thee!"

Ha! not the spirit *some* will cherish now;
Rather, "Go! what hast thou to do with
me,

Thou of the poor brain and the tar-
nished brow!"

Into the depth of the unfeeling heart,
God alone can look with understanding
eyes;
He seeth all when man shall see but
part,
In all things He alone is the One Wise!

Aye! all things bitter here are sent to
train
The soul, through what it hath of earthly
years,
For centuries to come—and we in vain
Do "kick against the pricks" with angry
tears.

From sorrow's teaching shall we learn far
more,
Than from the lighter lessons joy may
set,
And gather of a sad, yet precious store
Of knowledge — lessons we may not
forget!

Yet—"Come my way and I will comfort
thee,"

Is not the spirit that *some* cherish now;
Rather—"Go! what hast thou to do with
me,

Thou of the sick heart and the tarnished
brow!"

GOD IS THE GOD OF LOVE.

ONE hears it sometimes said, nor said in
joke,
Mankind *requires* that there be those
that preach

Damnation to *Eternity*!!—evoke
 An unforgiving God—the while they
 teach
 That He is even the God of Love! O,
 yet
Some human parents mercy thus forget!

The records of our earth, they say, have
 proved
 That fear of something awful beyond
 speech,

The souls of men once to obedience moved,
 And still is likeliest all their depths to
 reach;

The wilder is the terror that they shall
 feel,
 The lower to the *God of Love* they kneel!

Thus the hot air of Hell—the shocking
 cries

That shall a lurid fancy seem to hear,
 Uprising frightfully from infernal skies,
 Forcing obedience through degrading
 fear,

Shall souls induce to look to realms above,
 And longings breed to meet our "GOD
 OF LOVE"!

Try all things—holding fast the good—
 but *this*

With all ideas of justice seems to war!
 God is the God of everlasting bliss,

But everlasting misery were a law
 Who shall regard as just? Would *Man*,
 for aye,

Condemn to torments those who had
 offended

Himself, through Life's *few years*, to
 Hell's fierce sky,

To ghastly tortures that were NEVER
 ENDED!!

For me, can nothing change the firm belief
 I hold in one kind, all-forgiving God;

One pitiful to us in hours of grief,
 Using, but for our good, correction's rod!

Remembering what of Him of old was
 said,

That He, if merciful, was surely just,
 Just to the living—just unto the dead,
 Seeing that *He created us*—from dust!

Some vow, *unorthodox* is this—my view!
 That I do wrong to stand by such a
 creed,

Maintaining part of it needs be untrue,
 If contradicting other parts!—One's need
 Is for the Truth—and this, to my poor
 mind,
 One cannot in a faith so monstrous find.
 Hold fast and firm; let nothing ever move
 Thy faith in this: GOD IS THE GOD OF
 LOVE.

THANKFULNESS!

My God! how much in this great world
 of Thine

Have I to thank Thee for—how much
 pure joy;

How much of gentle skies and fair sunshine,
 Of memories sweet that none shall e'er
 destroy!

Have I not seen the angry tempests cease,
 The winds and waves go down upon the
 sea,

The silver dawn of fair and gentle peace,
 The ripe fruits shining on the orchard
 tree!

Have I not seen the gentle moon arise,
 To look down calmly on men's homes
 of rest;

The stars move brightly o'er the midnight
 skies,

Reflected in the ocean's peaceful breast!

Beyond all other things have I not known,
 The tender faith of Love—have I not
 felt

A joy, beyond all other joys mine own,
 As often at her feet in prayer I've
 knelt!

Therefore, how much in this great world
 of Thine

Have I to thank thee for, O God, what
 joy

Beyond all words—what glory of sunshine,
 What memories sweet, that Time shall
 not destroy!

A VOICE OF PITY!

FOR EARTH'S BENIGHTED SOULS

THROUGH the still air a voice of pity
 rang,

And passed above a sweet and western
 scene;

"O! poor and envious souls!" it sadly sang,
 "Why look ye upon life with eyes so mean?"

"Can ye see never earth's more fair and bright!
 Have ye no ears to hear the sweet and true!
 Must ye but brood o'er sad decay and blight,
 Nor ever seek a broader, fairer view?"

"See ye but tigers, stealing near your paths—
 Not the meek cattle that o'er green fields rove;
 Have ye but serpents coiling by your hearths,
 Hear ye the night-jar only — not the dove?"

"Have ye a sight so limited—so weak,
 Ye cannot bear a strong and open light?
 Have ye, then souls so poor, ye never seek
 To see fair buds that spring despite of blight?"

"Go! e'er thou sleepest, pray for clear, true eyes,
 Look for a sweeter path a nobler goal;
 Pray that thou may'st learn lessons strong and wise,
 And light may yet dawn on thy troubled soul!"

NO MORE!

No more!
 Thy year is nearing to its hour of rest,
 The light is fading on the mountain crest;
 By cold north winds thy rose's leaves are shed,
 The last flowers of sweet autumn now lie dead!

No more!
 Thou can'st not linger in the sunset grove,
 And look into sweet eyes dewy with love—
 And press as fondly on warm lips the kiss
 That once seemed all thou could'st demand
 of bliss!

No more!
 Thou can'st not fight thy battles with the strong
 Or chaunt the conqueror's loud and stirring song,
 And marching with swift steps across the plain,
 Count, grimly, the proud number of the slain.

No more!
 Thou can'st not now yon lofty peak ascend,
 Thy strength to climb is nearing to its end;
 Thy feet are wounded by each sharp-edged stone,
 Thy ear is troubled by chill winter's moan.

No more!
 Thy ships can battle with the breeze no longer,
 Thou growest feeble and thy toil the stronger;
 Sit down beneath thy vine-tree and repose,
 Thy day of Life is nearing to its close!

THAT FATAL TO-MORROW!

"TO-MORROW! to-morrow! O melancholy song!
 To-morrow I will repair that bitter wrong;
 To-morrow" — (O! hopeless and most piteous cant!)
 "I will lift up and cherish yonder broken plant!"

"To-morrow—(let no one mutter the words
 "too late")—
 "I will walk meekly and walk in a path
 but straight;
 Recall the slanders I but too lightly spread,
 If told of the living or of the silent dead!"

"To-morrow my hand shall heal each wound that bleeds
 Through blows of mine—tear up all evil weeds,
 By idleness nourished—to-morrow I will reform
 All foolish laws, and allay each rising storm."

To-morrow!—deluded soul—but that to-morrow
 Shall never be thine—as thou hast sown
 much sorrow,
 So thou much sorrow shalt reap, when the
 time is o'er
 Of pardon. Thou may'st destroy, but not
 restore!

Far better that ye had cried—O! this to-day!

Ah! save me, Heaven! from a moment's
 sad delay!

For know all ye who would trifle here with
 Time,

That trifling may be even as a deadly
 crime!

LOITERING SOULS.—I.

“WEARY ye not, ye foolish ones, of playing?

The shadows of grim night approach the
 grove;

Only the heedless, or the lost, are straying,
 Amid that darkness that no travellers
 love!”

“O! yet a little longer!” still was
 pleaded,

“Our labour is, as yet, but partly done,
 Our seeds are yet unsown—our fields un-
 weeded,

Not yet we lose the fair light of the
 sun!”

And yet long since was heard the last
 weird note

Of sea-bird, while the fisherman was
 calling

His farewell to his comrades, as his boat
 He urged from shores on which the night
 was falling.

Ah! hasten—danger may be on thy way,
 The heavy mists creep silently but fast;
 The ghost-like silence tells the close of
 day,

The gloomy shroud encloses all at last!

LOITERING SOULS.—II.

“OH! grant me yet another chance—once
 more

To labour and, it may be, yet to win;

Or give me back the chance I had,
 before
 My eyes had looked on folly, waste, or
 sin!

“Too well I comprehend!—the fateful
 gate,

That leads to Heaven's eternity is fast!
 And yet—O yet!—say not it is TOO LATE!
 Now that I can discern the light—at
 last!

“O! give me but one other hour!—until
 My eyes can bear the glory on my way;
 So—then grown docile to a Higher will,
 My steps no more in evil paths shall
 stray.

“See my imploring tears, and close not
 Thou
 The Gate of Hope with Fate's eternal
 bars;
 Veil not the heavens, but on mine haggard
 brow
 Let fall the light of sad and pitying
 stars!”

“Too late! too late! thine is the
 laggard's cry,
 Thy lamp is still untrimmed—behold!
 no spark!

Thou hast delayed too long—the sunset
 sky
 Is fading slowly—soon it will be dark!”

LOITERING SOULS.—III.

“NAY! why of sunset speak,” he,
 angered, cried,

“The hours of darkness cannot fall thus
 soon;

The great paths of my life are yet untried,
 Thou art a croaker, it is scarcely noon!

“Seest thou yon distant mountain top,
 whose crest

Glow's still as with the colour of the
 day?

O! I will scale that height ere I have
 rest,

Far as the distance seems, or lone the
 way!

"Ah! hold me not, my limbs are full of strength,
My heart is faithful and my soul is brave;
So would I play my part, even if, at length,
My tracks be crossed by rock or stormy wave!

"Thou art for ever prating of the stroke
Of midnight, and the dawn of newer days;
Day yet is early!" . . . Even as he spoke
The world had faded from his clinging gaze!

Lost! Lost! no star enlightens now the gloom,
There are no echoes living ears shall reach,
From that vast path that endeth in the tomb,
Wherein no lessons shall we learn, nor teach!

DEATH—THE CONQUEROR!

THOU standest by the bedside of the young,
Thou followest the pathways that they tread,
And where but now the lover's lay was sung,
Men chaunt the solemn requiems for the dead!

Thou dost select the mariner's lone grave,
As in the calm, or tempest, he shall sail;
Thou art beside the coward and the brave,
And peace and war repeat the same old tale.

Thou art with youth as it shall gaily move
O'er earth to dream of more than earthly bliss,
The lips that have been pressed by glowing love
Are chilled, ere long, by thine own deadly kiss.

And when the babe sleeps at its mother's breast,
'Tis not the parent watches it, alone;
'Tis thou that bendest o'er its quiet rest,
For some dark, dreaded purpose of thine own.

As twin with Life thou camest upon earth,
And Life is frail—alas! more strong art thou;
Neither in times of sorrow, nor of mirth
Shall mortals dash the crown from thy pale brow.

In battle thou art by the soldier's side,
He calls on Victory alas! in vain;
What is a conqueror in his haughtiest pride,
If thou art of the followers in his train?

Thou art a King that reignest over all,
Into whose long career shall no one see;
And worlds may pass away, and stars may fall,
But none of earth, O Death! can conquer thee!

A MELANCHOLY TRUTH.

THE holiest, noblest lives that earth may know
Are oft most sad, most anxious, or betrayed;
And paths to Heaven with very glory glow,
That seemed on earth to have been wrapt in shade.

Would, also, with the dead their faults might die,
That earth might suffer never, never more,
From the vile seeds that underneath the sky,
The dead had sown, ere their brief time was o'er.

But Truth is paramount, and of that dead
Must she speak plainly—or each festering frame,

Beneath the sod shall poison round it
spread
To fill the earth with sorrow and with
shame.

Some cry—let the dead sleep—let none
be driven
To unseal deep, unpleasant sinks once
more;

Recall the follies earth may have forgiven,
The meanness of the evil acts of yore.

Truly, 'twere best, left not such dead
behind,
An evil echo on the wandering wind,
Of their past deeds that shall corrupt the
ear
Of innocence, that listens without fear,
Imbibing the impressions of its day,
While passing onward on its thoughtless
way.

EVER FAITHFUL!

THOU art as pitiful as thou art wise!
True lover, husband, ever-faithful
friend;
Helped by thy hand, encouraged by thine
eyes,
May we, twain, onward march—so reach
the end!

In Sorrow's darkest and most hopeless
hour—

When "friends" proved weak, or in-
solent—I knew
There yet was one who to no storm
would cower,
One who was ever strongly, nobly true.

Love! Love! thou art mine own, both
mind and heart,
To thee aught that is treacherous is
unknown;

Thus have I faith our souls shall never
part,
That I with thee shall kneel before
God's Throne.

Nay! though we might be separated here,
'Twould throw no shadow on Love's
radiant tale;

One star shall be the guide to our career,
The star of Love that never long is
pale.

We two, methinks, were for each other
made,

And never shall be separated, Love!
Not even by Death our faith shall be
betrayed,
This shall we find in the fair Home
above!

Aye! thou art pitiful, as thou art wise,
True lover, husband, ever-faithful
friend;

Helped by thine hand, encouraged by
thine eyes,
May we twain onward march—so reach
the end!

MEN AND WOMEN.

DEAREST, I feel there is in life so much
Sweet to the eyes, and tender to the
touch,

Ennobling to the soul and to the heart,
Too soon I would not from it sigh to
part,

To lay down on its soil the fair, sweet
flowers,
That I have gathered in its earthly
bowers!

Full many gentle women walk the
ways

Of purity, of love, of holiness,
Their good works brightening many
gloomy days,

Leaving behind them only what shall
bless;

So that the world they quit, through their
fair lives
Is sweetened for each other that
survives!

Aye! and full many noble men, as
well,

Of whom but glorious deeds shall History
tell,

Of whom so many great things earth *hath*
told,

And long shall tell us still—men nobly
bold,

To Life but benefactors, true as great
Who feared nought save an ignominious
fate!

THANKFULNESS.

Now—when the winds and waves no more
are strong—

Now—when the nights no more are dark
and long—

Now—when the lightning blinds no more
mine eyes—

Now—when I hear no more the ship-
wrecked's cries—

Now—when the sunset's smile is on the
sea,

I come, O God! with outstretched hands
to Thee!

Now—when the bitter seek no more to
strike—

Their sneers, or smiles, to me, at last,
alike,

When evil steps no more can cross my
path,

Nor Slander sit beside my household
hearth;

Now—at the closing of a stormy day,
I reach, O God! at last, Thy sheltered
bay!

Now, when the hand is firm that once was
weak,

Now, when with calm indifference I
speak

Of enemies that strewed with flint and
thorn

Some of my paths, so that my flesh was
torn—

I turn, O God! from the rude, garish
light,

I come to Thee in the calm hours of
night!

Now — when the voices reaching my
retreat

Are *but the tones I know as soft and
sweet;*

And when, as twilight grows more deep
and grey,

The louder, upper voices die away;

Now, when Thy sky no more is overcast,
I rest beneath Thy smile, O God! at
last!

PEACE—GENTLE PEACE!

PEACE—gentle Peace—to hear thy steps
we listen—

Peace—gentle Peace—we look into thy
eyes,

And see them tenderly and gently glisten
With the sweet light that falls through
Heavenly skies.

Peace—gentle Peace—thou art amongst
our roses,

Thou guardest the fair produce of our
bowers,

And when the eye of daylight gently
closes,

Thou watchest us through midnight's
brooding hours.

Thou hast—alas for thee!—a shadow vile,
One that seems often to pursue thy
path;

And Sloth can smile a slow, unpleasant
smile,

As it sits even down upon *thy*
hearth!

And it needs be that war shall sometimes
say:

“There are vile enemies prowling on
thy lands;

Step thou aside, or I must bar thy way,
Thy roads need cleansing with unspar-
ing hands!”

Aye! bold and fearless war, facing the
light,

Not veiled in shadow in some valley's
hollow,

Nor fighting that ungenerous, secret
fight,

That some of earth's less noble children
follow!

Still—gentle Peace—to hear thy steps we
listen;

Still—gentle Peace—we look into thine
eyes,

And see them tenderly and softly
glisten

With the sweet light that falls from
Heaven's own skies!

O GOD! THIS HOUR OF
PEACE HAS COME!

THIS time of peace hath come—the bitter
voices

Of hate and malice slowly die away;
The heart grows calm, the wearied soul
rejoices

At rest—if coming at the eve of day.

THIS hour of peace hath come—the storms
are o'er,

The wind is but a melancholy sigh;
And something that hath been unknown
before,

Steals, somewhat sadly, o'er the
darkened sky.

One hears a distant muttering in the air,
But less and less that sound of feeble
fretting,

As grows the atmosphere more clear and
fair,

The day is closing, and the sun is
setting.

The storms are passing off—the angry
blast

Is o'er — the long-vexed flags and
banners furled;

Ah, yes! the peace of Heaven hath come
at last,

Its gentle light now shines upon *my*
world!

O God! this hour of peace, this hour of
Thine,

The soul hath need for prayer and also
rest,

Let now no longer the worn heart
repine,

The time of peace hath come—my hours
are blessed.

THANKFULNESS TO HEAVEN.

(FOR EARTHLY LOVE.)

THE day is nearing now to its decline,
The shades of twilight deepen on the
land,

And still I look in eyes for ever mine,
And still I hold one faithful, guiding
hand.

How shall I thank Thee, O my God! that
Thou

Hast given me this priceless help through
Life,

This comfort of an ever-cheerful brow,
This blessing of a heart that fears no
strife.

Steadfastly looking upward for the light,
Fearing no serpent's trail upon his
track,

Dreading neither obstruction, storm, nor
blight,

Nor, unavailingly still glancing back.

How shall I render Thee, Thou mighty
God,

The thanks I owe Thee for his patient
love?

Thou hast upheld us as dark paths we trod,
And sent us guidance from the realms
above!

He leaves the graves behind him on his
way,

His heart with sorrow wrung, yet never
weak;

He looks up steadfastly to Thee, to pray,
The help Thou only can'st bestow, to
seek.

How shall I thank Thee, O my God,
that Thou

Hast given me this priceless help through
life;

This comfort of love's ever-cheerful brow,
This blessing of a heart that fears no
strife!

MUSING.

SWEET is it, wandering by the sea at
night,

To watch the Ocean's broad and tranquil
breast,

Lying at peace beneath the clear star-
light,

So full of deadly passion, yet—at rest!

Sweet is it, under such reposeful skies,
To look into Love's deep and faithful
eyes,

To feel the touch of the warm hand, to
hear
The music of the voice, so low, yet
clear.

Sweet are the homes that know thee, O
pure Love!

The dwellings through which thy fair
form shall move;

The fruits that thou hast nurtured on the
tree,

The flowers that have been ever trained
by thee!

Sweet is it, and shall be for ever sweet,
To think how Love this world of ours
can bless,

Make glad the wandering of our troubled
feet,

And help us or by smile or by caress.

Sweet is it, dreaming of the days to come,
When Love and we shall quit these
mundane spheres,

To wander side by side, in Heaven's own
home,

Untroubled by the flow of earthly tears!

STILL MUSING.

So — looking on the scarcely breaking
waves,

And over which the moon serenely sails,
One muses on a thousand mournful graves,
And on humanity's oft tragic tales.

Aye! sad it is to think upon the poor
And selfish paths where some mean
creatures wait,

The little passions that can find the door
To ill-kept cottage, as to hall of state.

The loud professions made by Christians
here,

Whose lives are spent in worse than
trivial races,

The selfishness of many a career,
The mean ambitions stamping many
faces.

The wasted hours—the time so many spend
In pointing out their fellow-creatures'
sins,

Forgetting their own flagrant faults to
mend,

Ignoring 'tis the spirit *meek* that wins.

Aye—and with meditative, mournful eyes,
We look up into the star-spangled skies,
And think how sad the ways that many
tread,

As they pass on—to join the silent dead!

THOU SLEEPEST NOT,

O MIGHTY SEA!

THE voices of the earth are laid asleep,
Man rests his weary head—forgets his
grief,

But yet *thy* voice frets ever, O thou deep!
Thy restless moanings know of no
relief.

The shadows slowly veil the purple hill,
The bird is silent in its leafy nest;

The bleat and low of flock and herd are
still,

The eagle swoops not from the mountain
crest.

But still thou sleepest not, O mighty sea!
Thy echoes beat upon the peaceful air;
All dull and hopeless doth it seem to be,
The sound as of a mighty god's despair.

Time leaves no traces on the dark blue
waves,

His steps are hidden in earth's mighty
caves,

Mark not Arabia's ever-burning plain,
Under whose sands strange works of his
remain.

AN UNANSWERABLE QUERY.

AGAIN we hear the ocean's dreary moans,
As it uplifts its billows to the sky;
Beating in vain the grey, unyielding stones,
Yet drowning not the gull's pathetic
cry!

There are the bleak, the lonely plains,
where flocks

Of plovers settle as the year is dying;
The chattering starlings on the time-
stained rocks,

The sound of breezes in the pine woods
sighing.

But there are echoes—echoes sad and low,
The sweeter echoes of the earth's broad
plain,
That follow whereso'er our footsteps go,
Never to rise again!

There is the nightingale that often we
Have listened to at midnight's breathless
hour,
As sounding from some silent, leafy tree,
Or from some sweet rose-bower.

And shall we treasure, in a world to come,
These tender memories of our earthly
stay,
Or shall their echoes be for ever dumb,
As from these lower realms we pass
away?

THE FLOWER OF DEATH.

"In many places, on the way to Paestum, the country is entirely overgrown with Asphodel—the flower of death."—*Cities of Southern Italy and Sicily*; by AUGUSTUS HARE.

O FATAL Asphodel!—even as I write,
A vase filled with thy flowers before me
stands!
Ye looked so lovely in the evening light,
I gathered ye with mine own fearless
hands!

The flowers of death they call ye, yet I
fear
Ye not for all the legends of thy past;
Thine orange hues, so brilliant and so
clear,
No shadow of dismay have round them
cast!

Wild was the spot wherein ye blossomed
—there
Thou wert the queen of all that yet was
fair;
'Tis where the bittern once made his
retreat,
And into stagnant waters sink the feet.

And since that hour — that hour so wild
and strange,
When homeward o'er thee flew the
lonely crow—

Thy wild swamps may have seen but little
change,
Wild wert thou then, perchance still
wilder grow!

Aye! fatal Asphodel—even as I write,
A vase filled with thy flowers before me
stands,
Ye looked so lovely in the evening light,
I gathered ye with mine own fearless
hands!*

THE YORK AND LANCASTER ROSE.

UPON my table is a *queer* old rose,
Measuring four inches quite across the
head,
And full twelve inches round!—sweet to
the nose
It smells, just as its petals it is going to
shed!

O! but a fair, *striped* rose—one that has
played
Its part in history in the olden times,
Now so forgotten and left in the shade,
'Tis rarely mentioned in the poet's
rhymes!

And yet a curious picture does it seem
To us, bringing back visions, strange,
if dim,
One might "sit over" such a rose and
dream
About the past until the head would
swim!!

Yes! wild wars of the past dost thou recall,
O rose! although so fair to modern
eyes.
To-morrow all thy lovely petals fall,
Dead as the cause that thou dost
symbolise!

LIFE'S LATER REST.

THE storms indeed have passed — the
whirlwinds sleep,
The heavy eyes no longer wake to weep;
The brow no more is laden and oppressed,
The struggling soul hath found its later
rest.

* Gathered in July 1888 on a desolate and swampy waste some miles from Bournemouth.

God's will be done!—and if the heart could know
Such restful faith in the dark hours of woe,
It had not then all soothing hope refused,
It had not then so bitterly been bruised.

Yet is it hard—alas! *how* hard! to feel
In time of loss—of sorrow sternly real,
That faith must trust—nor faint, nor yet repine,
But cry — still cry: “Thy will, Oh Heaven! not *mine*!

Yet hath one found in darker hours of grief,
Even in despair, some strange and wild relief;
Amidst the thunder and the lightning flashes
Have we lain—silent—in sackcloth and in ashes.

Yet—storms passed o'er—the whirlwinds sank to sleep,
The heavy eyes no longer woke to weep;
The brow no more was laden and oppressed,
The struggling soul had found its later rest!

THE SWEETER ECHOES.

OFTEN—thank Heaven—upon Life's terrestrial plain,
The sweeter echoes of our days remain,
While anger's onslaughts we no more may hear,
Though once we heard them like a cold north wind,
Sometimes full distant, sometimes all too near,
Aye! these—thank Heaven again—are left behind.

Only the sweeter echoes now are left,
If still we weep, alas!—for ever weep
The dear ones of whom Death our ways bereft—
For grief like this in life may never sleep,
Though, as we look up to Heaven's calmer sky,
Its weight shall lessen, as the years pass by.

So—passing onward in the wake of Time—
We look up to the fair, blue space above,
Wherein we read the True and the Sublime,
And muse upon a great Eternal Love,
And trace the paths by weary mortals trod,
To pray we yet may meet the smile of God!

IN THE SILENT MIDNIGHT.

AYE! in the silent midnight one may think
With calmness on life's dreams of pride and power,
And as the flowers the dews of evening drink,
So drink we in the wisdom of this hour—

This hour of solitude—of holy peace—
This hour that hath to us been ever blessed;
This hour when shall the wicked surely “cease
From troubling,” when, *yet living, we know rest!*

This hour—when one more clearly sees the course
That hateful jealousy may take below,
And when malignancy shall lose its force,
And something of the *strength* of Truth may know!

The hour when lesser things shrink out of sight,
When coward foes are shamed by noble friends!
Then the soft, balmy peacefulness of night,
Makes, for the tempests of the day, amends!

Loftier and purer Thought the spirit fills,
The heart glows as with an Eternal Love,
As we look from earth's load of trivial ills
To the unfathomed arch that bends above!

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR THE BEST.

AYE! all things work together for the best!
And wrong is of the stronger soul a test!

Throughout all bitter fights and conflicts,
still
"Educing good" out of the "seeming
ill"!

The fragile plant that bears no wintry
wind

Shall leave no lasting memories behind!
Upon its life men placed but little store—
A sigh is sometimes breathed for it—no
more!

The noble oak may have its branches torn,
Even by such foes as it regards with
scorn,
Yet still remains the oak, however bruised,
And one to which no honour is refused!

And so with many a dweller on life's soil,
He lives, encompassed both by storm and
toil,
Yet, having much of honour, strength, and
worth,
His records shall be worthy of God's earth.

The paltry lives may hide them from the
wrath
That beats upon full many a noble path,
But though they live or die, men little
care,
Each is, at best, a *very* mean affair!

Yes! all things work together for the best!
And wrong is of the stronger soul a
test!
Throughout all bitter fights and conflicts,
still
"Educing good" out of the "seeming
ill"!

PEACE—AT LAST!

So, the dark shadows fallen on the
brow
Yield to the touch of mercy and of
peace;
The voices of despair, of sorrow, now
Die—one by one—away, and slowly
cease—
Thank God!

We look up to the calmly silent skies,
No longer through a mist of blinding
tears;

Again we raise our calm and trustful eyes,
Turned from the darkness of departed
years—
Thank God!

The chill, unwholesome vapours drift
away,
The world around is clear—not overcast,
And if the evening air is still and grey,
At least the heavier atmosphere is
passed—
Thank God!

The stormy struggles of the soul are o'er,
The fierce disturbance of an o'ertaxed
brain,
So long—so strong—can now disturb no
more,
And leave but memories of departed
pain—
Thank God!

Yes! the strange anguish — the heart-
broken prayer,
All that so long the paths of life op-
pressed,
Fade in the brightness of a clearer air,
And leave us to our late but grateful
rest—
THANK GOD!

DREAMING O' SUMMER EVES!

LOW-VOICED are ye—ye winds of summer
eves,
Each passing breath of peace and sweet-
ness tells
Of tender whispers to the rose's leaves,
Of gentle toying with the lily bells.

Aye! telling secrets of the dewy flowers,
Of apple-blossoms falling from the trees,
Of jessamine wreaths that, twining o'er
thy bowers,
Yet wave, obedient to the fitful breeze.

Ye are lit up by light from distant spheres,
With pensive rays of the mild, yellow
moon,
That glisten on the night-flowers' tender
tears—
Tears that lament thy hours must pass
so soon.

Sweet notes from even the sweetest of thy
birds,
Come clearer, stronger, as the light
departs;
That stir us thrillingly as love's own words,
And echo—ever echo—in our hearts.

Yes! I am grateful for thy deepening veil,
O night! through which thy queen so
softly gleams,
While Love repeats its never-weary tale,
And dreams again its ever-glowing
dreams!

OUT ON AN OSSIAN-LIKE PLAIN!

(November, 1888.)

THROUGH the weird mists the spirit-
features gleam!

And as the moon shines through the
fleecy clouds,

One sees the phantoms of our midnight's
dream—

Wrapt or in winding-sheets or ghastly
shrouds—

That meet the eyes—sad, melancholy,
fixed,

Whose glances seem with earthly thoughts
unmixed.

Once, saw the Poet Ossian, martial forms

Flit slowly through the moonbeams on
the plain,

Or borne before him, in the drifting
storms

Of falling snow, or pitiless, cold rain,
Pointing with withered hands, once stained
with crimes,

Where lay some mighty chiefs of ruder
times!

Sighs seem to fall upon our listening ear,
Whispers that are not holy, but that chill
The blood that flows no longer warm and
clear,

Sighs—breathing of some unforgiven ill!
Even as the pallid moon goes slowly down,
And earth is dark with an unholy frown!

Hearken! it is the owl's weird notes are
heard,
As yonder flits the melancholy bird,

But on this weird plain shall no echoes
meet!

The dark swamp-water oozes round our
feet—

The ghostly bat flits in our faces cold,
And shrill the wind sweeps o'er the un-
empt wold.

TOWARDS THE CLOSE OF LIFE'S DAY.

LOOK, love! the sun is nearing to the west!
Daylight departeth slowly—and so best!

The light and sweetness that we both have
known,

The faithful love that gilded all our
woes

Shall pass—nor let us, weakly, kneel and
groan:

All things upon this earth must find
their close!

Look! love! the sun is nearing to the
west!

So we draw nearer to our home of rest,
And as the sky assumes the hue of grey,
Die, one by one, all troubled sounds
away!

Rest is on hill and plain—on flower and
tree;

O Love! that rest let me find *here—with
thee!*

Aye Love! the sun is nearing to the
west!

The last light touches but the mountain
crest;

But so I hear thy voice I shall not fear—
Thou, that, beyond all words, art ever
dear;

O dearest! clasp and closely clasp mine
hand,

That I, so knit with thee, may quit this
earthly land!

IN THE PINE-WOODS— MEMORIES!

IN the dark pine-woods—when the moon
is bright—

In the soft hours of a warm summer
night,

And when each heavy task of day is done,
'Tis sweet to wander, hand in hand, with
one

Whose thoughts, whose words, are pensive
as the hour,

And watch the still, soft shadows as they
creep

Slowly and softly o'er each dewy flower,
Until all seem as wrapt in fairy sleep!

Then, ringing through the forest one may
hear

The nightingale, when little else is heard,
By whose rich, old-world notes, so ever
dear—

The melancholy silence shall be stirred—
As in and out the tall and dusky pines

The bat flits on its weird and ghostly
flight,

And even for a moment flits where shines
Upon its wings some planet's brilliant
light.

* * * * *

* * * * *

Ah! tender memories of other days!

Mysterious glimpses of the night's still
glory!

Ah! wandering paths and dusky woodland
ways

The hours of musing and of Love's sweet
story!

* * * * *

* * * * *

THE PICTURE ON THE WALL.

(Written in very early days.)

THAT picture, hanging on the wall—

That face—that portrait—but too fair,

Ah! still the tale I can recall,

The tale of love and of despair.

But 'tis a grievous one to tell,

And one that many weep to know—

Oh! I remember *her* so well,

That maiden, in life's spring-tide glow.

Ah me! a youth then crossed her way,

Not one of stately birth, 'tis said,

Yet one you meet not every day,

Nor see in every path you tread!

He looked a fearless, dark-eyed knight,
If scarcely one of high degree,
Stalwart of form, of lofty height,
With noble brow, full fair to see.

The maiden hoped that she might gain
Her parents her fond love to bless,
But life is as a twisted lane,
Whose shadows fill us with distress.

Yes! lovingly the maiden strove,
Kneeling to them, with streaming tears,
To win their pardon for her love,
But only prayed to stolid ears.

And then—ah! then—even in the dead
Of one full gloomy autumn night,
The lovers, sad, yet hopeful, fled,
And prayed might no one know their
flight.

Yet fierce pursuers came behind,
And, sounding nearer and more near,
Ring horses' hoofs upon the wind,
Nor veered, as winds are wont to veer!

The lovers sought the sea-shore—gained
An outbound ship ere daylight broke,
Their nerves were all too wildly strained,
Their hearts seemed in each word they
spoke.

But joy! the captain's heart was won,
And soon the rock-bound coast lay far
Behind the lovers, but the sun
Foretold an elemental war!

Alas! their hapless passion cost
The lives of many true and brave,
For ere the night the ship was lost—
Above it dashed th' Atlantic wave.

Deep down amongst sea-vetches lie
These lovers—their short dream is o'er;
The sky of earth, the ocean's sky,
Shall smile upon them never more!

THE TOLL OF DISTANT BELLS.

(Also written in very early days.)

THE toll of distant bells re-echoes slowly,
With no uncertain, hesitating sound;
And midnight is announced—midnight the
holy,

That seems to wrap in peace the sleeping
ground.

Not now we seek the woodland and the field,
Or pluck the sweet-briar rose, closed even
as day,
Or search for what new buds the lanes
might yield

The air is cooling and the sky grows
grey.

O! there are thoughts of joy as thoughts
of grief,
Breathing from all things at this mid-
night hour,
With every opened bud or falling leaf,
Telling the tale of Time's relentless
power.

And he—my noble guide through life—
whom I
Love with each beating of a grateful
heart,
Bids me look upward—when the glowing
sky
Seems to be linked with earth, no more
to part!

Truly, 'tis sweet to watch that glowing
light,
And listen to the wood-birds' evening
call,
Bidding each other, pensively, "Good-
night!"
As deeper and more deep the shadows
fall.

Pray Heaven we be not parted, love,
until
The time shall come when both of us
may leave
A world of strangely mixed delight and
ill,
A world where some may laugh, but
more shall grieve.

I could not live without thy tender care,
Mine in the hours of laughter as of
grief,
Without which life to me had held despair
Not seldom, while its pleasures were but
brief.

Yes! without thee had life been as a
flower
Half-withered, that, drooping, yet still
lingering, stands,

Dreary and long had been its passing
hours,
Its pangs unsoothed by thy strong,
loving hands.

Therefore, pray Heaven He part us not,
until
The hour shall come when both of us
may leave
A world of short delight, of lingering ill,
Where some may smile, but most remain
to grieve.

This ever is our prayer: but He knows
best,
Who gave to us a love so strong, so true.
This all must learn—tranquillity and rest,
Few dwellers on this planet ever knew.

LOVE IS EVER WITH ME.

(1890.)

No! in this life I never, dear, shall gain
The fame some mortals in their life-
hours reap;
Yet it were wrong did I of this complain,
Though I may have had much o'er which
to weep.

God knows the paths of life are sometimes
dark,
And hard to trace beneath but stormy
skies,
And with few flowers and fruits the way
to mark,
And with few warnings for unwary eyes!

And often white, carved tombstones mark
the way,
Beneath which friends of old in silence
sleep,
Beside which sometimes pilgrims stop to
pray—
Beside which often pilgrims pause to
weep.

And sometimes flowers grow richly round
the feet,
Sending a grateful fragrance on the air,
Then is the light of earth full calm and sweet,
Gilding the pilgrim's heavy brow of care.

Still, love is ever with me—thus am I
 More blessed than others under earth's
 broad skies;
 And I look up with many a grateful sigh,
 Feeling that God is good, that God is
 wise.

AN UNIVERSAL EVENING PRAYER.

(A note, dated 1889, says it "was written many years ago.")

GOD of the starry night,
 And of the brilliant day;
 God of the beautiful and bright—
 To Thee—to Thee—I pray!

The toil of day is o'er,
 The dew is on the ground,
 The hum of men is heard no more,
 Grey twilight steals around,

And night is now before us,
 The stars their vigils keep,
 O God of Life, watch o'er us,
 O guard us as we sleep!

Ruler of skies above,
 And of the deep below,
 Father of mercy and of love,
 Shield us this night from woe.

Let not the spoiler come
 With sword or flaming brand,
 To desolate our peaceful home—
 Ah! save us from his hand!

Let not the stroke of death
 Life's early blossoms crush,
 Nor yet disease's poisoned breath
 Destroy their tender blush.

Thou who can'st rule the night,
 Of madness and despair,
 Save us from fear and blight,
 Hear Thou, O God! our prayer!

Let us not be oppressed
 By sorrow's bitter rod,
 Give us Thy peace and rest,
 Thou great, yet loving God!

God of the starry night,
 And of the peaceful day,
 God of the beautiful and bright,
 God of the darkness and the light,
 To Thee, to Thee I pray!

IN THE WATCHES OF THE SILENT NIGHT.—I.

November 15th, 1889.

("The Tears of St. Lawrence.")

AYE! in the Watches of the silent Night,
 When earth is peaceful, and when skies
 are bright,
 Creation's wonders shall the thoughtful
 feel,
 And see on all things marked God's
 mighty seal.

Away from all the world's disturbing jars,
 We look into the skies above us spread,
 And note the wondrous shower of "falling
 stars,"
 Falling, it seemed, into the ocean's bed!

So strangely quiet now this earth of ours,
 Aye! and so peacefully, so gently still;
 The dew, untouched, lies sparkling on the
 flowers,
 Nor seems there any sprite abroad of ill.

Yet even now the wolf shall leave his den,
 The tiger stealeth forth from caverned
 rocks,
 The serpent wakens in the marshy fen,
 And near the hen-roost prowls the keen-
 eyed fox.

Take care, oh! wanderer—see thy feet are
 wise,
 Go not into the shadows by thy way;
 Let no foul mists veil ever thy calm eyes,
 And still for help, and still for guidance
 pray!

IN THE WATCHES OF THE SILENT NIGHT.—II.

LAST WORDS.

CONCERNING A NOBLE AND UNSELFISH MAN.

(October, 1891.)

A NOBLE and unselfish man,
 One who seemed formed upon heaven's
 noblest plan;
 One treading but pure paths upon earth's
 plain,
 One neither proud, nor insolent, nor vain.

But strong and true!
 Who, though much of earth's wickedness
 he knew,
 Yet ever, with a clear and thoughtful mind,
 Looked less for sins than virtues of man-
 kind.

Feeling the most for sorrows not his own,
 As ever glad to note another's joy,
 To him fretful repining was unknown,
 His faith was one no troubles could
 destroy.

Yes! ever ready, ever glad, to praise,
 His footsteps strong in Charity's own ways,
 Holding the firmest faith in One above,
 True in his friendships—trustful in his love.

The world will soon be fading from my
 view*

Nay! almost as this true soul's praise
 I pen;
 Certain that God will know these words
 are true,
 And spoken of one noblest amongst men.

Never to him the sad appeal in vain,
 Even from the darkest, most unhappy
 home;

He gives the best he hath of heart and
 brain—

God bless him now and in all times to
 come!

A CRY FOR FORGIVENESS.

On hearing of certain wild and wandering steps of
 sin and sorrow, by one who had hitherto led a blame-
 less life.

(Dated April, 1893, the latest of all
 the dates.)

O GOD! our trespasses—our sins—forgive,
 So brief, so sad on earth, is our career;
 But one short span of time thy children live,
 One oft of trial, sorrow, pain, and fear.

O God! forgive! for some of us are blind,
 And some are deaf, or dread Thy
 thunder not;

To them Thy voice is heard not in the
 stormiest wind,

Thy smile is unseen on the fairest spot.

O God, forgive us! for our hearts are
 weak,
 Our feet are lame and stumble on the
 way;

We know not when to listen, when to
 speak,

Thy heavens seem oft-times threatening,
 cold, or grey.

Oh! Let us not forget her noble past,
 Although the o'ertried mortal falls and
 faints!

Full many a race the runner fails at last—
 Not unto all is given the strength of
 saints.

O God! forgive us!—bitter is the cry
 Of man whom Thou hast in Thine image
 made;

He, lost, looks up into a troubled sky,
 And of the coming tempest is afraid.

O God! forgive us! earth-bound ways are
 hard,

Blindly into the gloom our steps are
 driven;

From evil forms thy feeble creatures guard,
 And let death find us—praying—*and*
forgiven!

STARS OF THE NIGHT.

(A PRAYER FOR THE MARINERS.)

(To be set to music.)

STARS of the night,
 So fair and clear,
 Shedding your calm light,
 Far and near.

I watch for your beams through the cold,
 still air,

As I kneel to my evening's grateful
 prayer.

Befriend the emigrants!—all who weep
 In the out-bound ships on the mighty deep,
 Who feel that the sea is great and lone,
 And think of the dear ones left on shore,
 And dread—as they hear their vessel moan
 And rock—they shall see their friends no
 more.

* The Authoress lived till 1908.

O stars! bright stars!
 Light the "roads" at sea,
 Light the rocky "bars"
 When there may not be
 A lighthouse, lighting the fearful ways
 That the ships pass through in the fog-
 dark days.

Stars of the night,
 So fair and clear,
 Shedding your calm light
 Far and near
 I watch for your beams through the still,
 cold air,
 As I kneel to my evening's grateful prayer.

TO THE HARVEST MOON.

O! MOON of the harvest—tender moon—
 Thy light is ever a priceless boon,
 And they who glean by thy gentle ray
 Go richly laden upon their way!

And the peaceful songs of the toilers come
 Across the fields and the leafy groves,
 As each plods wearily to his home.
 And the evening meal, that he dearly
 loves.

And the owls that sleep in the laurels
 green,*
 Steal softly out from their leafy screen,
 To spread their silent and snow-white
 wings,
 As the bat flits by and the beetle sings.

Or is it rather a *hum* than a *song*!
 And yet, as he swings himself along,
 How far in the air is the beetle heard
 As far as the song of a tiny bird!

O! moon of the harvest—take thy path
 Through the strange, bright track of the
 "Milky Way"!
 While the kettle is singing on the hearth,
 As we thank our God for the close of
 day!

RAIN DROPS.

O, RAIN drops—rain drops—falling so fast,
 On the folded buds, on the early leaves;
 Though the sky for awhile is overcast,
 'Tis only the fretful heart that grieves!

And the birds and the butterflies hide
 awhile,
 As the storm-winds flutter their tender
 wings,
 And the cloud that covers the sun's warm
 smile,
 A chill to the mead and the mountain
 brings.

And the cold mists rest on the tree-girt
 vales,
 All white and still as a corpse's shroud,
 And the light of the silent evening pales,
 And the sun sinks under a heavy cloud.

And the merry voices of childhood ring
 No longer across the wood and plain;
 And the blackbird sits with a drooping
 wing,
 Or only warbles a fitful strain.

Yet oh! ye rain drops—falling so fast,
 On the folded buds, on the early leaves,
 Though the sky for awhile be overcast,
 'Tis only the fretful heart that grieves.

To-morrow the sun will shine once more,
 And the flowers look up as the blue sky
 clears,
 And the birds sing out as they sang before,
*And the clouds will have passed to other
 spheres!*

AN OLD-FASHIONED SORT OF SONG!!

(Written long ago!)

FAIR is a home in the far, green West,
 A home where the eagle builds its nest;
 Where the untouched fruits make fair the
 tree
 Where the deer bound by with a foot-
 step free.

And sweet is a home in the forest shades,
 A home in the mossy, greenwood glades;
 With the stars above and the flowers
 below,
 And the wild bird's song where'er we go.

* A pair of white owls often slept in the big old laurel bushes near the great barns of Sandon Bury.

I care not—I—for a garden's bloom,
Or the four square walls of a student's
room;

I love not the clear and placid sky,
Or the breeze's southern kiss, or sigh.

Far rather—for me—the roar of waves,
And the voices, hoarse, from the ocean
caves,
Or the cold, blue space where the planets
roll,
And the lights shoot up of the Northern
Pole.

O! a life for me that is full of glow,
Where the march is strong, nor the foot-
steps slow,
Where the joy for the trouble makes
amends,
Yes! *that* is the life for me, my friends!

NONSENSE VERSES.

(Very antique.*)

AH! tell me, whose is that too happy lot,
That calm existence that is haunted not
By the strange dreams a restless soul has
taught,
That ne'er hath known the weariness of
thought,
The hell within a discontented heart,
The soul's wild wish some wondrous
thing to try,
In which earth hath no parcel and no
part!
Aye! that o'erpowering longing even to
fly

Through the dim twilight sky, away!
away!

To some fair realm of undiscovered day,
Where lovers wander on a wild, weird
beach,

Where footsteps none, except their own
may be,

Dreaming of glowing worlds within their
reach,

And listening to the voices of the sea.

Then that chill change when the fair sky
grows grey,

When all these wondrous visions pass
away;

The voice that of my heartlessness makes
moan,

In praying for a life so still, so lone;
Forgetting that calm dwelling of sunshine
Where dwell some friends, as calm, that
now are mine!

True! there are hours when I have done
this wrong,

And tried to chase away the dazzling
scenes—

The glorious shadows of the poet's song,
In rearing the young shoots of kidney
beans!

Forgetting, quite, the nice, fastidious bard,
While looking eggs up—in a poultry yard/
Or emptying all the ancient garden-tubs
To water cabbage plants, or elder shrubs.

But ah! they come again and yet again,
These dreams that crowd upon a youthful
brain,

With all that is most beautiful and bright,
To tempt the fancy and to bless the sight!
And there are ancient castles, grim and
stern,

With ruined roofs, o'ergrown with moss
and fern,

Or, still, in all the pride of pomp and
power

With barbican and dungeon, keep and
tower,

Each warlike battlement and parapet
Frowning so sternly in the red sunset!

Where—when the evening shadows round
it fall,

There is not even a woodbird's shrilly call,
To echo on the summer evening air—

Low, dreamy music softly wakens there,
And mournful bells in the blue distance
toll,

That steal upon the lonely traveller's ear,
And thrill the listener's melancholy soul

With echoes, flute-like, exquisitely clear.

Yet there are lovelier visions even than
these—

Than towers, or palaces, or woods, or
trees—

For there are hours when I have stood
and gazed

On forms that would have mocked the
painter's art,

* The writing of nonsense verses was once a favourite game.

On dark eyes that to Heaven's blue vault
were raised,

The noble brow, the fine curved lips
apart—

And one—oh! could I paint his glorious
brow,

Or tell thee how its memory haunts me
now—

It was like none that I have met with
here,

Untroubled even by the stain of fear—
As strong and brave as if the soul within

Had never known one taint of earthly sin.
Its joy was all unlike the hollow mirth

That sounds like mockery from the sons
of earth.

Its sadness—oh! the look of that dark
orb

Whose grief for other's sufferings would
absorb,

In one pure feeling of regret, alone,
All consciousness—all feeling for its own!

I knew I could not meet it, *in this world*,

It was a cold, a dreary consciousness;
O! well I knew that proud, pale lip had

curled

With thoughts no human mind could e'er
possess.

(Here is heard the cooing of the wood-pigeons.)

* * * * *

"Our home is a calm and sunny spot,
Where the dreams of the restless trouble
not;

Music is even in the summer rain,

As it falls on the leafy trees;

There's food for us in the barley grain,

Or the field of tares and pease;

The light of the sky to us is blessed

And the leaves of the summer form our
nest."

* * * * *

Just then a rabbit came bounding by,
And his large eyeballs glared fearfully,

When he heard this bird confess its
bliss!

For never before had his worship's ears,
(Though his was a life of many years)

Listened to such a coo as this!

He quite forgot

That he was not

In his own soft, sleepy hollows,
But he sat and moved his ears about,

Till the gipsy girls had spied him out,
And they spoke to him as follows:—

"One lingering hope is left us yet,

Beautiful creature! in thine eye,

There isn't one glance of vain regret

For the many hours that have flitted by.

Ah! tell us, is thine the happy lot we've
sought so long to find?"

(Rabbit aside.)

"Now of all classes in the world I've
heard

That women are by far the most absurd;

But, faith! I never until now believed it,

Although my wiser friends, I own, per-
ceived it!

* * * * *

FUN.

SHORTHAND NOTES! *

(Supposed to be taken at a meeting of
many Millers.)

JOHN JONES HIS SPEECH.

My friends! I rise before you now to say,
This is indeed a proud and happy day!

He who addresses you before you stands

With, he may boast, the very *whitest*
hands;

And men shall say, whatever bread *has*
risen

In former days, no bread has riz like his'n!

Not that I am, of *course*, a common
"*baker*,"

I would as lief† be called an undertaker!

But bakers are our neighbours, and we
row,

It may be said in the same boat, you
know!

* These are notes made more years ago than we can remember, of a real speech delivered at a meeting of millers, in what Punch would call a "too-ral loo-ral" district. More concerning the matter we cannot say!

† Lief was often used in Hertfordshire instead of "as soon!"

You may, perhaps, expect me here to trace,
As being sartinly the proper place,
The progress of that power *I* calls sublime,
By which we grinds our corn in shortest time*
Since we have met together, as I take it,
Upon this here small stand† to celebrate it!
But 'tis a subject of such comprehension,
I fear I should but weary your attention—

(Hear, hear, and a pause—.)

Yes! as I've said before, we have not time
To fairly treat a matter so sublime!
I'll then but speak of things within my power—
That we unrivalled be in grinding flour.
What flour can equal this?

(*Takes some in his hand.*)

Who calls out "Fudge"?
Look at this—gentlemen and friends—and judge!
(Pray, Mr. Beadle, keep that fellow quiet,
'Tis not the first time he has made a riot!)
But I'll not trespass on your patience longer,
Good friends and neighbours let me only add
That grist, or flour, more pure, and grain more stronger,
Can't in *no other* mill—be never had!
(*Meeting adjourns to a neighbouring public house!*)

Sandon Bury, 1844.

(Composed before its author was 16.)

LINES TO AN EAGLE;

OR,

FOR A CERTAIN "SOARING" CRITIC!

O! WHY should we hold thee—thy spirits are strong,
Thou art pining to soar o'er the land and the sea,

To chain thee to earth would be surely a wrong,
Go forth, then—thou noble one—go and be free!

'Tis folly to hold such as thou in a chain,
To curb thy ambition were simply a shame;
But oh! such attempts would at last be in vain,
For thou hast a spirit that nothing shall tame!

Thou art born of a nature both fearless and wild,
Thou can'st sail o'er the mountain, perchance, o'er the wave;
Thou art one by no luxury ever beguiled,
Thou art one whom no terror can ever enslave.

There are those who would, like thee, to—
fly by some plan—
Aye! one they have "mapped out"—
have "laid down"—for thee;
For nothing is half so conceited as *man*,
As any one gifted with eyesight can see!

You know there are those who *themselves* cannot fly,
Not even an *inch!* o'er the spot where they dwell;
And they hate — *how* they hate! to see others mount high,
And lies of that lofty flight surely will tell! ‡

THE WISE STREAMLET!

O RIVULET bright, of mountain birth,
Leaping down from a cloud-veiled brow,
Wandering over the plains of the earth,
Where in thy rashness goest thou?

For the haughty boulders bar thy way
With a patient strength thou can'st not wear,
With their ancient sides all stained, or grey:
And little for all *thy* noise they care!

* We believe that this alludes to the first working of the mill by steam.

† A small platform, utilised for the purpose in the street.

‡ Written long before the days of aviation.

Whence goest thou, in thy headlong haste,
With a furious speed that seems but waste,
With thy daring waters scattered wide,
Or rudely tossed from the mountain side?

* * * * *

"O! I go in search of the mighty sea,
I care not—I—for the rocks I meet;
In the pride of youth they are nought to
me,
And the after rest will be yet more
sweet!

"For *there* I am safe—no burning draught
Can lessen my beauty or my power;
Oh! there have been times when I have
thought
That Death itself were a happier hour!

"Then *I* in a giant's work can share,
And help the ships on their outbound
way,
Like other seas of the earth to fare,
From the rising sun to the close of
day!"

THE THREE OFFERS;

OR,

YOUNG LOVE *VERSUS* OLD WEALTH.

LETTER NO. 1.

FAIREST and dearest maiden! wilt thou
come
To share what now is but a hapless home;
To change its gloom into the smile of love,
To make it glowing as the skies above?

So that each day seems spent in Paradise,
Through thy bright dimples and thy tender
eyes;

So that flowers beautiful and fresh and
sweet
Shall spring up underneath thy tiny feet!

LETTER NO. 2.

THE ANSWER TO NO. 1.

As ladies may *propose*, even in *our* day,
I need not be "affected!"—rather say,

In e'en the plainest words, I'd like to know
What you have in your power, sir, to
bestow?

Yes! I would ask distinctly—*What* have
you

Of wealth your very flattering suit to
aid?

Say! have you diamond buckles for my
shoe?

For to "speak out" one should not be
afraid!

LETTER NO. 3.

THE ANSWER TO NO. 2.

Alas! fair lady—only this right hand,
This faithful heart have I to offer thee;
I have no gold in City, wealth in land,
Nothing of value doth belong to me!

But oh! a warm and constant heart is
mine,

And I will cherish thee, thou fairest
flower;

Place thee in all I *may* have of sunshine,
Through all life's troubles—all earth's
darker hour!

LETTER NO. 4.

THE ANSWER TO NO. 3.

Thanks! I am deeply grieved—but one
needs more

Than you can offer, I'm afraid, before
One takes upon oneself a certain yoke
That you know is a burden—not a joke!

I trust you may find someone like yourself,
Whose soul may rise superior to mere pelf,
And who is as a hardy plant, while I
Was only born to meet a *sunny* sky!

LETTER NO. 5.

SECOND LOVER.

O! gentle lady, be thou mine, and thou
Shalt have the fairest gems to deck thy
brow,

And stately halls through which, queenlike,
to move,
In silken robes, befitting my proud love!

And thou shalt reign o'er a most noble dwelling,
 All things submissive to thy voice and hand;
 Thy bowers of fairest roses shall be smelling,
 The deer shall herd upon thy forest land.

LETTER No. 6.

THE ANSWER TO No. 5.

My friend, I thank you for your kindly words,
 Nothing *could* be more flattering,
indeed;
 I see that you have kept exotic birds,
 And know how much of tender care they need.

Truly, I cannot bear of chill the *least*,
 I shrink at the slightest breath of east;
 Alas! my friend, I *know* that I should die,
 If but the briefest storm should sweep
my sky!

Yes! gentle friend—thy offer I accept,
 Nay! since I had it I have scarcely slept!
 What tender gratitude — ah, yes! what pride,
 Shall I not feel as I become thy bride!

Then will I dress in costly robes and bright,
 In all things pleasing to my — no! *thy*
sight!
 (The first's a slip o' th' pen)—and you shall be
 Proud of the wealth that is *displayed on*
me!

LETTER No. 7.

THIRD LOVER.

Dearest! be mine! They do but offer thee
 Jewels and gold—but not the faithful
 heart;
 Truly a sail upon a sleeping sea,
 But in frail boats that a light breeze
 might part!

They do but offer thee a summer love,
 That shall be thine but while the skies
 are warm;

And they would cherish not a bleeding dove,
 Nor yet protect thee in the days of storm!

LETTER No. 8.

THE ANSWER TO No. 7.

Ah—yet! my friend, remember the old saying—
 When Poverty shall enter through thy door,
 Love—all its former promises betraying—
 Flies through the window and is seen no more!

Then what becomes of all his pretty roses?
 Alas! they lie all crumpled at our feet;
 And Time will change to nettles those
 same posies,
 That *then* shall smell—ah! *anything* but
 sweet!

LETTER No. 9.

THE ANSWER TO No. 8.

Fear not! true love is faithful—faithful still,
 Although the snow lies deeply on the plain;
 Although the wind of winter shall be chill,
 And flower-buds die beneath its cruel reign.

The love *thou* speakest of is even a cheat!
 Not the true love that *I* would proffer—
 No!
 'Tis nothing—trust me—but a vile deceit,
 But mine shall never make so false a
 show!

LETTER No. 10.

THE ANSWER TO No. 9.

Then—I am thine! and we will dwell together,
 In stormy days, as in the sunniest
 weather!
 Nothing us twain shall ever now divide—
 Aye! we will live and die, Love, side by
 side!

(End of the Correspondence.)

IN THE DENSE FOREST.

WITH "TRADITIONAL" ELVES!

THROUGH the dense forest's massive shade,
At twilight hours the lovers strayed,
When blossoms, dropping from the trees,
Gave sweetness to the passing breeze.

And thoughtlessly the lovers' feet
Pressed down a thousand violets sweet,
Although they told their piteous tale
In perfumes wafted by the gale.

(How wonderingly the forest elves
Are listening to the whispering grass),
The world around—is but themselves!
And Heaven!—the moments as they
pass!

One muses o'er the hours—nay! years,
Of which our memory keeps no trace—
If there are also smiles and tears,
That centuries shall not efface.

The elves hear but a foreign tongue,
The cry of souls—to them most strange;
For of the elves 'twas always sung,
They knew no touch, no thought of
change.
If spirits—if some vow—they be,
Are they still soulless through eternity?

A LOVER'S LAST LETTER.

CAN'ST thou recall that time, so long gone
by,
With neither blush, nor smile, nor bitter
sigh,
When—with Love's first, sweet, tremulous
surprise,
I felt the spell of thy dark, thoughtful
eyes?

Ah! in those days—so strangely long ago—
Thy tender voice to me was clear, if low;
And still in lonely hours I here repeat
Its echo—gentle, melancholy, sweet.

I knew not then, nor even now, can tell,
The meaning of that deep, mysterious
spell,

That binds me to thee, even in these
last
Sad hours—knowing all grief will soon be
past.

Never—as now, alas! too well I know,
Was meant for me in life so much of
bliss,
As call thee mine: much I foresaw of
woe,
But yet no anguish bitter as was this.

Youth! youth! so hopeful—dreaming that
his will
And strength will bring him through
each stormy day!
That Spring is transient, that bleak winds
can kill,
Oppress his thoughts but little on his
way.

O let me call thee Love! this once—no
more!
Each throb of this tired heart will soon
be o'er
There comes a time in men's sad pil-
grimages
When they once more may read youth's
long-sealed pages.

Never on earth shall we two meet
again—
Nor would I now e'er wish recalled that
pain
Whose bitter memory still, alas! could
blight
All the soul *might* recall of glad and
bright.

A few short years—O! but a few short
years!
Records of sorrow—blistered once with
tears,
And man is dust — and only strangers
come
To read the name inscribed on his last
home.

Yes — let me call thee Love! — this once
—no more,
Each throb of this tired heart will soon be
o'er:
Love! Love! — forgotten never — still my
heart
Remembers thee as thus on earth we part!

A LETTER TO A WOULD-BE FRIEND.

I MAY think kindly of you—yet 'tis well
That we seek not to be close friends in
life!

Think not the cause thereof is hard to tell,
The reason why *such* friendships oft
breed strife.

We *may*, to each feel kindly—only; *but*
Where there is no affinity—no tastes
That are alike, the gate of love is shut,
And we walk side by side o'er barren
wastes.

The hours were fruitless that we, side by
side,
Might spend, compared with those with
others passed;
Between us two might come no storms of
pride,
Yet—an unpleasant, uncongenial blast!

There are so many you might better *like*,
Your common-sense this truth has surely
taught!
As there are many, also, that might strike
My mind—friend, as more suitable in
thought!

Therefore—I see no object in our meeting,
Except as chance might bring it, in
strange hours;
So send I, finally, a friendly greeting,
But—we will dwell apart, in earthly
bowers!

NO MORE!

NOTE.—A song arranged for the guitar—to be sung
under the window of Dame Falsehood—in the
Watches of the Night!

AH! no more!

You have shaken the dew from the delicate
flowers,

The mouth of sweet waters your rude
hand hath sealed;

You have startled the doves in their mid-
summer bowers,

You have frightened the hare from its
"form" in the field.

Ah! no more!

You have broken the strings of the lover's
guitar,

And silenced the echoes that once were
so sweet;

And the calm voice of peace hath been
changed into war,

To the blare of the trumpet—the tramp
of rude feet.

Ah! no more!

You have paved with rude stones all the
sweet forest paths,

And crushed all the strawberries, ripe,
in the grass;

You have left all untended the fires of our
hearths,

And the voice of our sorrow is heard
as men pass.

Ah! no more!

In the time of their trouble the sad were
untended,

The sound of their grief was distasteful
to thee;

The bonds of wronged friendship can never
be mended,

The vessel we watched hath long foun-
dered at sea.

Ah! no more!

'Tis the story of life—'tis a tale of sad
learning,

'Tis a desolate story of sorrow and
blight;

And the hour cometh not for the lost one's
returning,

For the footsteps are lost in the shadows
of night.

DISTRAUGHT!

(A VOICE HEARD IN A CHURCHYARD
ONE NIGHT.)

"LOST! LOST!

O shall I never hear that voice again—
Shall it be that for ever I may strain

Mine ear, to catch its sweet and tender
tones—

Only to hear my own re-echoed groans?

"Lost! Lost!

O! shall she never lay that head so sweet
And fair, where she shall feel my heart's
warm beat?

O! shall I never clasp her to my breast,
And feel sweet freedom from the world's
unrest?

"Lost! Lost!

Shall she not hear me—as I kneel beside
That mound wherein her tender form they
hide—

To whisper, from that couch so dark, so cold,
That still are treasured the sweet days of
old?

"Lost! Lost!

O! let me pray that I may see her rise,
To meet again her lover's longing eyes,
To tell me that her heart is still mine own,
That as I weep I shall not weep alone.

"Lost! Lost!

Hearken to the cold whispers of the trees,
That faintly pass through the still, starlit
air!

Voices of spirits float upon the breeze,
But bid me nothing know — except —
despair!

Lost! Lost! . . ."

VERSES OF MYSTERY.—I.

(WHAT WAS SEEN IN A CHURCHYARD
ONE NIGHT.)

These seven Verses of Mystery must have been composed in the girlhood of the Authoress, about 1844.

THE moon hath sunk behind the forest,
and a heavy gloom

O'erhangs the fair green larches, like the
shadow of the tomb;

And I see one grisly figure, with an air of
stern command,

That beckons me to follow, with its white,
uplifted hand!

O! 'tis a ghastly shape that thus uprises
with the mist,

And with a creature of this world no
kindred hath, I wist!

I would not care to follow that mysterious
shadow—I

Might go to realms that knew no smile
from daylight's cheerful sky;

Yet do I almost feel constrained to follow
in "its" ways,

Through the voiceless, solemn shadows
of the strange, mysterious night—

Constrained by that pale ghostly hand,
and by that soulless gaze!

Although those noiseless steps may lead
for ever from the Light!

And even as I hesitate—good luck, or ill,
for me!

The moon seemed suddenly to pale and
sank behind a tree;

And I—though I am fearless—I who fain
would know my fate,

And learn what is from mortals veiled,
alas! am all too late!

That Shape that, only now, stood by yon
carved and mossy stone,

Hath vanished in thin air, and I—*am*
shivering and alone!

VERSES OF MYSTERY.—II.

* * * * *

It was a strange, wild place, to suit a
musing soul, alone,

Where plants, unnamed, unknown, grew
strong, where grass was never mown;

Where shy birds built their secret nests,
deep in impervious bowers,

And where the bees sipped honey from a
world of scented flowers.

There moorhens sailed upon the waters of
a pigmy lake,

And hares slept unmolested in the brown,
untrampled brake;

Then rose the heron's hollow scream—
uncanny sound that woke

Full many eerie echoes that the sombre
silence broke.

Within the wood surrounding this lone lake
there was a spot

So shadowy and ghostlike even the wild
doves sought it not;

There have we sat at twilight, when the
red sun was declining,
Or in a dimmer, weirder hour, when the
pale moon was shining.

There—sometimes came a strain of song,
but none could ever tell,
What was within its tender, its most
melancholy swell,
That made one think upon a lute touched
by no mortal hand,
But by cold, shadowy fingers clasped,
from some unearthly land!

And on one ghostly night, when the fair
stars were gleaming o'er us,
And the dense shadows of the pines lay
heavily before us,
Strange steeds of many hues and many
shapes went prancing by,
And still their hoofs no echoes sent
through the pale, shimmering sky!

On one there sat a lady, with pale brow
and sunken eye,
Who, as she passed us, uttered one un-
earthly, hollow cry,
That echoed not, but passed away, and
left a silence deep
As that which fills the last dark homes
where earth's sad mortals sleep.

* * * * *

VERSES OF MYSTERY.—III.

(ON THE SEA-SHORE ONE NIGHT AT JUST
ONE O'CLOCK.)

THE Warder, looking from his post,
Sees nothing on the midnight coast,
Nor heareth he the dreary moan
Of one who wanders there alone!

The dead who know no hallowed graves,
Move mistily across the waves,
To speak to one who by the shore,
Mourns sadly, as the stars pass o'er.

THEY.

"He is with us!—he whom you weep,
Is dwelling in the coral deep,

Where keeps he bowers for thee alone—
O! therefore come!—rejoin thine own!"

SHE.

"But have ye flowers—flowers such as he
Loved, when on earth he dwelt with me?
Flowers ever beautiful and fair,
Like those with which he bound mine
hair?"

THEY.

"Aye! flowers of every varied hue
Shall surely, there, enchant thy view;
O come!"—and *then* the Warder heard
A sound as of the waters stirred;
But nothing ever heard he *more*—
The waves slept calmly as before!

VERSES OF MYSTERY.—IV.

THE WANDERER.

BESIDE her on a primrose bank was
lying
A lute o'er whose sweet strings the wind
was sighing;
Alas! she had awakened some sad chords
That touched her young heart deeper far
than words.

And I saw now what I had prayed to see,
A face that seemed no mortal's face to me;
Lips full and soft, and eyes of darkest
blue,
Locks long and rippling, of a dusky hue;
But oh! the heavy hand of grief had
spread
O'er her sweet, noble brow, and paleness
shed
Upon her features—while her slender form
Was bent, as bends a reed before the
storm.
And as I looked on and in silence gazed,
Hidden from sight, her lute again she
raised,
And poured forth a wild strain, so sadly
sweet,
I scarce could keep from falling at her
feet.

* * * * *

LATER.

My soul was firm and I resolved to try
To win her, and, if foiled, I could but
die!

And yet I went on with a throbbing heart,
Each throb so loud I, oftentimes, needs must
start;

Yet, treading on the autumn leaves that
lay

Upon the path, I took my well-known way.
So visited each well-loved spot once I
Had called mine own, with sad and fare-
well sigh:

But she, alas! was absent, and a blank,
Strange feeling on my heart like iron sank:
All cold and silent as a graveyard seemed
O'er which in pity the sad moonlight
beamed.

* * * * *

* * * * *

Here is the rose-bower where long since
we met,

Truly so changed—but unforgotten yet:
Then, with slow footsteps and with figure
bent,

Towards a well-known spot I slowly went,
And lo! beneath the boughs of a dark tree,
Where oft in summer nights the owl
sat whooping,

My eyes a pale and shadowy form could
see

Under those boughs, sit silently and
drooping;

Upon her arms her head seemed sadly
pressed,

In attitude of grim despair—not rest!

* * * * *

* * * * *

Towers, half dismantled, met my wonder-
ing gaze—

It was no longer the remembered scene
Of earlier and, alas! of happier days—

Now, only dreams of pleasures that *had*
been.

No longer heard was childhood's merry
shout,

No longer groups of guests—passing with-
out,

Gave all the air of peacefulness and glad-
ness—

Nay! here one breathed the very breath
of sadness!

By gates once open thrown—freely un-
barred—

Was stationed now the stern and silent
guard,

And vainly each, in turn, I rashly tried,
Mine entrance still was sturdily denied.

Perplexed and disappointed, I scarce
knew

What path to choose, what conduct to
pursue,

Until returned to memory the wall,
Environing the castle and the small,
Yet pretty garden, once the loved resort
Of her whose form so longingly I
sought;

Alas! just then—under the heavy frown
Of gloomy clouds—the sickly moon went
down.

* * * * *

VERSES OF MYSTERY.—V.

THE UNHAPPY LOVERS.

* * * * *

FULL many a hand was on the dagger
laid,

Full many a hand half-drew the shining
blade,

Stilled was each sound of revelry and song,
While voices of armed men rose stern and
strong.

Thoughtful and silent by the captain's
side,

Sat one who should have been his chief-
tain's bride,

But who rejected him, just now, in proud,
Cold words, and said her heart was e'en
possessed

By one more noble — that the ghastly
shroud

Should sooner cover her cold, lifeless
breast,

Than they should make her give her hand
away,

To one she could not honour—or obey!

But — cursing — he, ere many days had
 flown,
 Immured her in a dungeon built of stone;
 There lingered she—Italia's fairest flower—
 She that was raised within so bright a
 bower;
 Who ever seemed so delicate, so frail,
 That she might wither at life's first, fierce
 gale;
 Aye! there, indeed, they kept her, her
 proud mind
 To sorrow and to solitude resigned!

* * * * *

AFTERWARDS.

"No! I was scarcely wretched—dear," she
 said,
 "Knowing that my beloved had safely fled,
 And hoping that I there would surely die,
 With none to watch me with a pitying eye.
 For I have faith there is a region far
 From earth—where nought Felicity shall
 bar,
 Where there no treachery is and no more
 pain,
 Where we shall meet, nor part, beloved,
 again!"

She paused—a blush o'er her pale features
 stole,
 And then she added, in a lower tone,
 "Thou know'st that Eldred hath a sordid
 soul,
 And yet I say not wealth he craves,
 alone;
 But if thou could'st amass enough, I
 know
 How deeply that his avarice would move,
 Perchance to even consent I might bestow
 My hand on him whom only I could
 love!
 At least induce that cruel, distorted mind,
 My longed-for liberty to give again—
 That freedom for which I so long have
 pined
 And wept, dear one—but wept, alas! in
 vain!"

* * * * *
 * * * * *

NOTE.—Here the fragment becomes illegible, being
 much mouse-eaten. And, thus, whether this prudent
 lady's hint concerning "Money" was successful
 remains a mystery!

VERSES OF MYSTERY.—VI

AFTER THE INCANTATION!

SILENT stood Edric, as, with curdling
 blood,
 He saw a ghastly, livid form emerge
 From some thin vapour of the stagnant
 flood,
 And sternly face him, on the water's
 verge.

Its gaze upon him fixed its vengeful look,
 Seemed as the red glare of volcanic
 stones!
 And Edric's very soul with horror shook
 As thus it spoke, in deep, sepulchral
 tones:

"Thou hateful murderer! — whose cruel
 hand
 Once sent me wandering from mine own
 fair land,
 And forced me, with a demon's power, to
 dwell
 With evil things in the foul depths
 Hell!

"To weave a spell of power, that thou
 may'st see
 The wretched thing that thou hast rendered
 me;
 To force thee to repine, and yet in vain—
 For *this*, vile soul, I come to thee again!"

"And yet thou need'st not"—Edric then
 replied—
 "For long and sadly have I rued the day,
 When in thy heart's red blood my hands
 were dyed,
 To leave a stain that ne'er shall pass
 away!

"Long years since then have vanished—
 yet, alas!
 No moment's peace was mine since thou
 did'st die—
 Wearily, bitterly, the dark months pass,
 Filled with remorse's ever-wretched sigh!

"Pardon, at last, my sins against thee—
 cease
 Thy deadly hate that I may die in peace.
 Nothing that I have loved is left me now,
 As though the curse of Cain were on my
 brow!"

THE PHANTOM.

"Nay! but to penetrate thy very heart,
Until thy spirit sigheth to depart,
To make death deadlier as it draweth near,
For this I heard thee—and for this
appear!

"Ask not for pardon—Oh! thou hated
foe—
Although thy prayer hath lessened half
my woe—
For joy it is to think is mine the power,
To bring thee, tortured, to thy dying
hour!"

On Edric's ear the Phantom's answer fell
As on some watcher's ears the fatal knell!
Who could his anguish paint, or even
name,
As dark despair the mortal's strength o'er-
came?

Deprived of the last hope remorse had
left,
He hid his features with his trembling
hands—

Of sense and almost of his life bereft:
Then sank in silence on the midnight
sands.

And still the Phantom gazed, and as she
gazed,
Her brow seemed darker than the star-
less night;
And as, at last, her spectral eyes she
raised,
They seemed to sparkle with Satanic
light;

* * * * *

Then as the cock crowed, the grim spectre
fled,
And under a huge rock she left Edric dead.

VERSES OF MYSTERY.—VII.

THE WANDERER'S RESTING-PLACE!

'TWAS midnight, and the summer breeze
moved softly in the autumn trees,
While o'er each graveyard's time-worn tomb,
was thrown a deep and mystic gloom—
The silent ghosts, each pale and sad,
Came forth in shadowy garments clad.

'Twas midnight, and no voice awoke even
the ghostly raven's croak
The heavy shadows of the hill, on moors
below lay cold and still—
And over all, as in a dream,
Fell silently the moon's cold beam.

One, wandering on in grief and pain, his
tragic past recalls again—
And as the grim churchyard he nears, his
heart beats loud with deadly fears—
Yet heard he neither voice nor sound,
Save of the west wind moaning round.

But oh! he seems to see once more, a
vision of a day long o'er—
Eyes that he knew in former days, turn on
his face their piteous gaze,
And look reproachful with the thought
Of misery that *his* hand had wrought.

Oh! that would pass this endless night,
whose memories fill him with affright,
And paint with such a fatal stain, a time
of hideous sin and pain:
Alas! he dared not even pray,
But moaning on the ground he lay!

And in that spot where sleep the dead,
each in his cold and narrow bed—
Aye! on that spot of ghastly ground, with
towering cypress trees around,
Where none come now to pray or weep,
He sleeps his last and dreamless sleep!

THE GRUMBLER.

WHERE is the sunshine that we saw, just
now,
So brightly lingering on the mountain's
brow?
Where is the light that danced upon the
sea,
And glittered from each leaflet on the
tree?

Where is the warmth of the south wind,
and its sigh
Of quiet and peace in the summer's happy
sky—
The song of the lark and the cooing of the
dove,
The carol of joy and the gentle voice of
love?

What has become of the perfume of the
rose,
And where are the lilies' blooms of un-
soiled snows,
And the sweetness of our violets, the pale
glory
Of the primroses—are all these but an old-
World Story?

All dead—dead—*dead!* departed from this
earth,
Unblessed in their life, as blighted in their
birth!
There is nothing left that is "pure" in this
world of ours—
'Tis a place of ruins and of dishonoured
bowers!

And the world, alas! is still as the world
of old,
With its evil tongues, and its hearts both
false and cold;
And Love hath the gleam of falseness in
his eyes.
Oh! the life of man is only a life of lies!

LOVE THE CONQUEROR!

FOUL memories, truly, do we leave behind,
Of coldly spiteful eyes, of lying mind,
Of blistered lips that we have even
kissed,
Of evil shapes that seem to float in mist.

Of envy that had gladly murdered life—
As certainly as might the assassin's knife—
That loathed to see the warm and brilliant
glow,
Of talents that *itself* might never know.

The stealthy walking of unfaithful feet,
The narrow brow of low and mean deceit,
The Pharisaic soul, that ever says
Its own damnation, as it sweetly prays.

These hateful things are foreign to the
air
Of this sweet spot, so peaceful and so fair;
The dreary sounds of earth's divisions
cease,
And here is only tender love and peace.

So much in human life is there to love,
That seems as sent to us from worlds
above,
So much of joy upon our paths is shed,
So much of beauty is around us spread:

That gratefully we feel, at close of day,
That Love, through all, has had the
strongest sway,
That as the evening hours of life grow
late,
Love *as the noble Conqueror stands*—of
Hate!

SOMETHING OF THE WASTE OF LIFE.

SOME melancholy echoes there must be of
days gone by,
Though they may to the Stoic seem un-
worthy of a sigh—
But something of the *waste* of life must
still oppress the soul—
The anguish of tired feet that only found
a fleeting goal;

The love that hath been blighted, and the
eyes that were deceived—
The warm and generous heart that but too
easily believed—
The steps that chose the paths that seemed
most glowing with the flowers—
The weary limbs that sought for rest in
but unfaithful bowers!

The story though so old shall time yet still
repeat,
The following of the "phantom" light,
with eager, thoughtless feet,
The warming of the scorpion in a but too
trusting breast,
The fighting hateful battles when the soul
is needing rest!

The climbing up the mountain-side, so
noble in its height,
So golden in its glory and so vivid in its
light,
Only to find success was ever useless and
that all
Its glory came to this—"a climb without
a fall."

These and a thousand other lessons all
must learn in life,
A cold contempt for enemies, a fearlessness
of strife,
For royal road is none, to either victory,
or peace,
From earliest dawn of life on earth, until
that life shall cease!

LIFE HATH MANY COMPENSA- TIONS.

TO ONE—FRETFUL.

LIFE hath full many compensations, dear:
If thou hast one true heart with thine
to beat

In times of grief or pain—let neither fear,
Nor thanklessness upon thy pathways
meet.

Think what it is in this vexed world, to
know

Of eyes that on *thee* look their very
kindest,
Of hands that helping thee are never slow,
But firm and ready, near and warm, thou
findest!

Think what it is to know that there is one
Who never slanders, who will not for-
sake,

Who, though thou sometimes foolish things
hast done,
Thy side, not thine antagonist's, will
take.

Think what it is when grief hath bowed
thy head,

To have it to a faithful bosom pressed,
And when thy soul is sick with earthly
dread,
To find, in arms that tremble not, thy
rest!

If such thou knowest—then, upon thy
knees,

Thank Heaven, and patient, bear with all
thy woes;

Alas! our spirit here but dimly sees—
God only all that troubles mankind
knows.

MAN'S BIOGRAPHERS.—I.

Of Lord Lyndhurst Disraeli said, "The world has recognised the political courage, the versatile ability, and the masculine eloquence of Lord Lyndhurst, but his intimates only were acquainted with the tenderness of his disposition and the playfulness of his light and airy spirit."

This same man "Lord Campbell represented as a brilliant and unscrupulous time-server, almost approaching the type of a Mephistopheles!"—*Times*, December 6th, 1883.

To one biographer the "shield" is *blue*—

He sees it only in a certain light;
Another holds it in a different view,
And loudly vows that it is "black as
night!"

Now, "Truth" declares that she will have
her say!

Points out, on flowing hair, the skilful
dye;

Maintains that all the time the locks are
grey,

That seem so black to the world's care-
less eye.

Whom men address as *Truth* one must
confess,

Is often a huge humbug nothing more,
She is a vulgar mockery, nothing less,
Of that fair goddess whom should *all*
adore!!

Truth hath a sad time of it in these days,
Amongst a certain set, too well we
know,

Her *seeming* pure feet walk in miry ways,
The *seeming* white robes are *not*—pure
as snow.

Falsehood *will* masquerade in Truth's
attire,

Falsehood *will* wear her sandal—ill of
fit,

And though these thefts provoke all good
men's ire

And loathing scorn—*she* careth not one
bit!

She can say *sweet* things of a "dingy"
name,

Just for some *dearest* friend of hers to
hear:

As Truth, she knows, can bring her words
to shame,

She chooses times when Truth may not
be near!

These were, at least, the practised ways
of those

Who preached the loudest falsehoods we
have known;

They are Truth's sometimes agile, skilful
foes,

She cannot hope to reach their "hearts
of stone."

She speaks, to them, a foreign language,
~~one~~

Whose finer accents are for them *too*
fine.

Some, Truth have pictured as a glowing
sun,

Yet are there lands whereon she cannot
shine!

MAN'S BIOGRAPHERS.—II.;

OR,

HAPPY THE MAN WHO HAS NO HISTORY!

HA!! there should be many happy on this
earth:

There are those that make no mark in
the world but this—

In the count of its lives the note of a
death, or birth,

And the crowd shall its shadows hardly
note, or miss!

A myriad insects float on the summer air,
One marks for a moment that the swarm
is there,

But a sudden shower, or a chilly breeze
sweeps by,

They are known no more for either a buzz
or sigh!

For they "make no history," and no
lessons leave

For the fools to mock at, or true friends
to grieve,

They come and they go, and in time all
pass away,

And the world deems not these are
"Cæsars—turned to clay"!!

And happier *they* may be, *who*, dying,
left

But little here that history may narrate,

And the earth will roll on, although bereft
Of those whose tale may be sometimes
told too late.

It is often ludicrous—if often sad,
If a glance at man's long chronicles we
give,

And observe the silly records some will
add

To the list of those who for future fame
would live!

MEN'S BIOGRAPHIES.—III.

Delicious OPPORTUNITIES!

"In these days the reader never feels sure that he
will not be entrapped, by the pretext of a biography,
into being made the depository of an assault upon the
reputation of somebody else—or some policy, or
doctrine, the biographer happens to dislike."—*Times*,
December 29th, 1883.

IN these small — "Ha! ha! ha!" —
biographies,

That people write of their "dear
friends," you know,

You'll read of many friendships, broken
ties

And hatreds—and guess not *what* lies
"veiled below"!

It may be made the means for "*paying*
out,"

Sometimes, even the *biographer's* hot
spite!

The world knows nought of what it's all
about,

Or if the "toothsome tit-bits" are *all*
right!

Assault on some whom the biographer
Just happens to dislike! 'tis a fine
chance!

And one that never may again occur!
'Twill much the sweetness of the task en-
hance!

It may so *delicately*, too, be done!
Express your grief for some one's evil
state,

Speak of the trials occasioned by—that
one!

So prettily to feed your own veiled hate!

You can in every case of "difficulties,"
 Put forward just the side that you
 admire!
 Veil all its failings from the world's keen
 eyes,
 And drag all *you* may like not—through
 the mire!

MAN'S BIOGRAPHERS.—IV.

LET mediocrity—pray—rest in peace!
 It is no subject fit for foolish praise,
 Or even silly blame—you but increase
 The number of poor records of these
 days.

We might forget its faults, if you unduly
 Did not laud its small virtues to the
 skies:
 The world, in these things, sometimes
 proves unruly,
 And *will* not see things through an
 author's eyes!

In commendation you, no doubt, will
 quote
 A hundred trifles that to you seem great—
 No doubt our smiles a *friend* may haste to
 note,
 While, for his purpose, hiding *frowns*
of hate!

An artist's brush, so it is whispered —
 smothers
 An ugly blot—when, or where'er he
 chooses—
 Some things "loom largely in his vision"
 others
 He either "paints out," or in distance
 loses.

Then—some are *colour blind*, and only
 see
 What they are told to see, and only
 find
 What they *desire* to find, and that may be
 Some place in *front*—the rest concealed
 behind!

MAN'S BIOGRAPHERS.—V.

THOU wilt not be forgotten—anxious soul—
 If thou hast lived a fair and wholesome
 day,

If thou hast paid, in full, each righteous
 toll
 That thou wert called upon in life to
 pay.

If thou wert strong in action—clean of
 hand,
 Thou wilt not be forgotten—even when
 Thy memory may be old—it still shall stand
 And smell sweet to the minds of worthy
 men.

Far better—this—than words of a time-
 server,
 Painting the trivial records of thy life,
 However worthless all, of a preserver,
 May be the petty details of thy peace or
 strife!

It is the vain — *poor*-minded, who have
 'thought
 'Tis all things in the future to be
praised!
 The little lessons that they think they
 taught,
 They pine to see preserved, engraved,
 and—*glazed!*

Not in this ever-busy world of ours
 Needs it that men should cherish the
 small story
 Of its mere trivial, unimportant hours.
 These should not elbow out its days of
 glory!

MAN'S BIOGRAPHERS.—VI.

A HINT TO THE "BIOGRAPHILIST"!

LET little souls go to their rest, at last—
 Blow not for them a penny trumpet's
 blast:

Let them, ye fools! in happy silence rest,
 Their follies thus forgotten—as is best.

Deep in the grass-grown grave—and far
 below,
 Where either flowers, or weeds of earth
 may grow,
 Let *slumber the mistakes that marred*
their day,
 Now they have passed for evermore away.

Praise only given to exalt the giver,
 (The plan of many a "sycophantish
 liver"!)
 Opens men's eyes past follies to recall,
 That *else* had slept beneath the funeral
 pall.

So let them sleep in peace: the old plant
 dies,
 And fairer ones shall grow 'neath other
 skies:
 True mercy is, at least, *to let them rest*.
God knows if they were faithful — or un-
 blest.

We oft dare sit as judges of the dead,
 Seeing the fair, or evil side alone,
 Here are fair footsteps—there a devil's
 tread.
 To God, not man, Life's secrets can be
 known.

MEN'S BIOGRAPHERS.—VII.

OF FLATTERERS.

Too oft a saintly life shall pass from earth
 Whose noble deeds in silence have been
 done—
 Although they were of even priceless worth.
 God only knowing how the race was run.

Yet good had been achieved in myriad
 ways,
 Wounds had been bound and sacrifices
 made,
 But calmly done — awaiting not men's
 praise,
 Therefore the left hand ne'er the right
 betrayed!

Bearing without a murmur or a sigh,
 The storms of earth, the heavy clouds
 above,
 With thoughtful brow, with contemplative
 eye,
 A silent life and yet a life to love.

ANOTHER only boastful steps shall take,
 And nothing do but that which soundeth
 well;
 Nor sacrifice for others' welfare make,
 Unless of this shall someone loudly
 tell!

These keep a flatterer—some one slyly paid
 In divers ways, veiled secretly from view,
 Doing this work in the obscurest shade,
 Then boldly boasting of "good work
 and true"!

Ignoble work, in truth, is done by these,
 And addeth to earth's poor, unworthy
 fruit;
 They live for self—*self* alone to please,
 For men's applause is their beloved
 pursuit!

MAN'S BIOGRAPHERS.—VIII.

"VANITY OF VANITIES—ALL IS VANITY!"

ONCE, in the days of "auld lang syne," we
 read,
 The Great a Poet kept!—one near at
 hand,
 To blazon forth each even paltry deed,
 So as to reach all *long* ears of the land!

He was in various ways repaid, 'tis known—
 If not *quite* on the throne of honour
 seated!
 Given of the sweetest meat, and spared
 the bone,
 At every banquet was his presence
 greeted!

"Poor human nature!" vanity is still
 Its ruling passion, and the one most
 mean:
 Whole lives of some the smallest details
 fill,
 So little that is strong can edge between!

But now we speak of scarce a sweeter tale,
 A Flatterer too oft is "kept in store"
 In many households, one who shall not
 fail
 To sing of paltry deeds from shore to
 shore!

All "flesh is vanity!" but *some*, one sees,
 With *more* "vain flesh" than others,
 beyond doubt!
 Keep ye, if wise, out of all paths of these,
 Or some day they will surely "*Serve you
 out!*"

THE VOICE OF LONDON.

(Date probably about 1850.)

I HEAR a voice above all other voices,
That fills the heart with fear, with awe,
with wonder,
And when the tones are glad the heart
rejoices,
When angry, terrible as stormy thunder.

Nor are there other tones that are replete
With half the varied sounds of grief and
pain,
Now full of echoes—echoes full and sweet,
Now full of anguish—turbulent or vain

O! I have heard the choruses of streams,
The everlasting murmur of our tides,
The strange, mysterious whispers of our
dreams,
The dash of torrents on the mountain
sides.

And yet, ye thousand voices of the
earth,
So full, at times, of feelings half
divine,
With love that hath in Heaven above its
birth,
There are no others that compete with
thine!

Yet there are some, alas! whose untuned
ears,
Can only hear Humanity's sad cries,
To them the tones are never sweet and
clear,
That catch their echoes in eternal
skies.

Yet every accent of this human life,
Now full of sweet compassion — half
divine—
Now terrible with war, complaint, and
strife,
Thy hand, Oh Heaven! placed in this
world of Thine!

SONGS AND TALES FOR CHILDREN.

The following poems are dedicated, with my fondest love, to all my Grandchildren.

THE PROSE PREFACE.

1888.

"In the Watches of the Night"—wherein love has been extolled, the grandeur of the sea sung, the Pharisee and calumniator rebuked, and God praised and thanked for His mercy—let not children, the most beautiful of His creation, be forgotten by one to whom they have ever been exceedingly precious.

To cheer the spirits of some dearest little ones in the hour of their most sad affliction—the loss of a beloved mother—this collection of little tales and songs was rapidly composed some few years ago, and met with an extremely gratifying reception from the tiny critics. They are now printed for the amusement of other children.

ADDRESSED TO YOUNG PARENTS.

OH! all young parents, listen to the counsels I can give—
They *may* be useful in the anxious life you often live!
Attend unto a grandmother!—you never will repent it,
You need not smile, good friends—for I assure you I quite meant it.

Hath not a grandmother a head and hath she not keen eyes?
Hath she not garnered her experience, like the truly wise?
Doth she not know what foxes are—hath she not sometimes found
The hole of that sly creature in a corner of *her* ground?

Doth she not know that wolves are ever prowling round the sheep?
Doth she not rest with one eye open, even when asleep?
Doth she not know a wasp's sharp sting?
Hath she not often dealt
A well-aimed blow and crushed the *wretch*
—just as its *smart* she felt!

A grandmother is older than *yourselves*!* and she hath grown
In wisdom as in wrinkles—as to *some*, at least, is known!
The old are not so blind as our young people sometimes seem,
Who look upon this troublous life as just a glowing dream.

The counsels that one proffers only reach unheeding ears;
They have no foolish doubts—they cry!
they have no foolish fears;—
Ah! . . . if they *would* but listen to the counsels of the wise,
They *then* would know *if* love can perish,
—*wisdom never dies.*

MANY VOICES.

OUR dogs and foxes bark, for they don't know how to speak,
The little robins sing—but the mice can only squeak,
The little flies in summer buzz—the bees and beetles hum—
While all the fishes, small and big, as *all* declare, are dumb!

The gentle cow will moo—but the bull delights to bellow—
For he, you know, is loud of voice, and is a restless fellow—
The larks are fond of singing in the beautiful blue sky—
While the corn-crake in the barley hath a strange and mournful cry!

You hear the piggies in the farm-yard make a horrid *squeal*—
That frequently reminds one of the grating of a wheel!
The cat, when not engaged in "hunting," hath a pretty purr,
Unless you chance to stroke her skin the wrong way of its fur!

* "I should *think* so!" one catches the echo of a little voice.

The mischief-loving magpies are very fond of chatter—

Especially when something to disturb them is the matter—

When, if you look about you, it is likely you will see

That cruel thief, the cat, is slyly creeping up the tree!

Our donkeys startle by their bray; the baa-lambs loudly bleat,

Though all are very silent when they have enough to eat!

The bird will sing its sweetest note when sitting by its nest,

And of all the sounds I speak of here, I think that *quite* the best!

THE TOO-AMBITIOUS ROBIN.

"LET me fly up to the mountain, where no *common folks* can come!"

Said the Robin to the Eagle; "I am weary of my home—

With *you* I shall be always safe, with you the sky is clear,

Besides, no cats can be up there, for little birds to fear!

"And there I shall be Somebody!—protected by your wing!

But here I find I'm nothing but the *merest* little thing!

And even the sparrow flaunts me, while the lark from out the corn,

Can fly far higher than *my* wings can carry me, at morn!

"Yes! I have no companion of my own, except a bird

Of Kinship with myself, 'tis true, but who has ever heard

Of robins that were wise enough to wish to see the world

In realms where rolled great clouds, not where the smoke wreaths, only, curled!

"Where one could reach the sun that oft reclines upon the crest

Of that high rampart round thy home whereon thy wings may rest!

Here all things, as you see, are simply flat and commonplace—

Only on *level* ground I see the lambkins run their race!

"O! mighty King, make room for me—I long to dwell with one

Who lives so high up in the world — so close beside the sun!

The woods and plains where others dwell lie far below your feet—

And none dare trouble *you*, or seek to share *your* lone retreat!

"And so I shall be far from all the foes I meet with here,

Who make my life a torment, often, through distress and fear—

With *you* I shall be thought of with respect, for all will know

How far away am I from the poor fools who dwell below!"

No answer gave the eagle, who had come down on the plain

Where the early, tender lambs upon the juicy clover fed—

What time the sun was rising and the heavy clouds of rain

Hid from the eyes of travellers the mountain's purple head.

It may be that the king of birds quite felt himself too *great*

To trouble his wise mind with such a small affair of state!

'Twas no concern of his—the cares of such a tiny bird,

It may be even that its peevish prayer was never heard!

At least no word did he vouchsafe, or none the Robin caught—

If he *did* think at all about the thing he may have thought

"If robins will be fools they must be—'tis no fault of ours!

We can't as sponsors stand to their endurance, or their powers!"

O discontented little bird!—methinks you were not wise

To seek to leave that home of thine—that home of placid skies—

And soar to reach those higher regions,
where the winds are keen,
And where when storms come on, but little
shelter can be seen!

And yet one day it happened, when the
day was warm and bright,
Poor Robin left his home behind and
soared towards the light
The dwelling of his noble friend to visit
and explore—
And therein, it *may* be, to dwell, for he
returned no more!

'Tis said he found—what many find—all
was not gold that glittered,
That there were tempests in the sky as well
as on the plain—
'Tis certain that his gentle notes in summer
never twittered
Amongst the straw-thatched cottages that
once were his—again!

And that within a mountain grave ere long
the rash one slept—
For he the angry tempests of the heights
but feebly breasted.
Oh! vainly on the plains below his children
for him wept,
But never did they find the spot whereon
their father rested!

Ah me! the weary hours and days—the
long, long months passed o'er,
They saw no more his soft, round eye,
nor yet his bright red breast—
The house where once poor robin lived now
knew his song no more,
*Another little bird was in possession of
his nest!*

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

"O SHEPHERD—night is bleak and cold,
Why art thou not asleep, in bed!"
"I go to see my little fold,
To know that none are ill,"—he said.

"O shepherd—see! the hour is late,
The mists are heavy overhead—"

"I go to close the sheep-fold gate,
And see that all are safe,"—he said.

"The winds blow cold across the wood,
The winds blow cold across the plain—"
"I go to see my lambs have food,
And warmth and rest,"—he said again.

He gave them straw in which to sleep,
A shelter, till the break of day,
Then the good shepherd saw his sheep
Were safe—and went his homeward way.

POOR LITTLE HUMPHERY;

OR,

YOUTHFUL CHARITY.*

POOR little Humphery sat on some stones—
Eating a dinner of bread and bones!
When a kind little boy stepped beside him
and said,

"Have you *nothing* to eat but those bones
and dry bread?"

For he thought it scarce pleasant to dine
off a meal,
That seemed but a *scrap* of a dinner,
no more—

For his was the gentlest of hearts and
could feel,
For the wants of another, both sorry
and sore.

And poor little Humphery said —
"Mammy is poor,
She has nothing to eat but some bread
for her dinner,
They give her but twopence a day and no
more,
And so my poor mammy gets every day
thinner?"

Then the other small boy ran away very
fast,

For he thought to go home for some
pudding and meat;
And he came back to poor little Humphery
at last,

With a small basket filled with some
good things to eat.

* A little scene witnessed one day in a lane in Herts.

"There's something," he said, "for your mammy as well,
As for you, some of Mrs. Cook's very best pies—"

And what there was in them I really can't tell,

But the little boy thanked him with tears in his eyes.

THE DUCK AND THE VILLAGE BOYS;

OR,

THE BOASTER'S PUNISHMENT.

THERE was once a little duck, who built her summer nest

On a bank, amongst the rushes, in a place that she knew best—

And o'er her home the nettles in a graceful manner curled;

She was a timid little thing, and didn't like the world!

And as the peaceful days went past, how merrily she went,

Now swimming and now waddling, all amongst the weeds and grass—

Where sweet majoram and other plants above her softly bent—

Or lifted up their fragrant heads to let her gently pass!

One day, it seems, she laid an egg—an *ordinary* egg—

And yet she stroked it with her bill, caressed it with her leg!

Then smoothed it with her wing, and lastly, warmed it with her breast—

For of all eggs she e'er had seen, this was, she cried, the best!

O! never duck quacked as *she* quacked—the very reeds were stirred

With something like dismay when the incessant sounds they heard!

Even often in the night she quacked, until the frogs awoke,

And each one tried to drown a *quack* by yet a louder *croak*!

"No one of you is clever, like myself, and *that's a fact*,

As *anyone* can surely see!"—so ran the boastful theme,

And oh! this song of vanity both morn and eve she quacked,
Nay! some have even said they heard her quack it in a dream!

And one especial morning did she make so loud a noise

That she attracted notice from some passing village boys,

Who thought her egg like other eggs—no difference could *they* tell—

And so they clambered down the bank and took it off to sell!

None had disturbed her in her home, or mortified her pride,

By treating her as *just another duck* had she not tried

To teach the whole wide world her common egg was *something rare*!

While all their eyes could see it was but—ordinary ware!

O! many have we known like her, who think themselves *so* wise,

And take such pains to draw to them the world's observant eyes—

Yet each one in the end but for our kind compassion begs,

Because he views his eggs as quite beyond all other eggs!

A WELL-KNOWN DUCK.

ONE OF MANY.

THERE was another little duck, who *wouldn't* be taught to swim,

Other ducks might learn, he said, but what was that to him!

'Tis but the fool, he told his friends, who does as he is bidden,

And always fears to disobey *because* he might be chidden!

He'd walk about the *land*, he said, like any other duck—

And if they liked to try *he'd* show how full he was of pluck!

O yes—they soon would find that he was growing far too old,

To be scolded like a baby and to do as he was told!

Then he began to quack, and quack he did, in such a way,
His friends began to waddle off — they vowed he spoilt their play!
They thought he seemed ill-tempered, yet ill-tempered scarce was he,
He only wished to prove that he could "independent" be.

His mother bade him "hold his nonsense" she was sure he could
Swim better, *far*, than all the rest, if he would but be good!
For he was much more clever, *she* maintained, than all "those others,"
Who only were the sons of vain, or worse, of *stupid* mothers!

But 'twas a case where arguments are simply waste of breath,
And when persuasion worries him, who "tries it on," to death!
'Twas just as when you on a giant try a pigmy's shoe—
You *think* you shall achieve the feat, but yet—you *never do*!

And so his mother found at last, and heedless of his quack
Of fright, she pushed him in the pond and bade him not *come back*
Till he could swim like *other* ducks and not disgrace his birth—
Yes! *other* ducks, she told him, loved the water, not the earth!

Aye! thus she pushed him in the pond, with all her might and main—
And pushed him in so far he could not waddle back again!
But oh! it was heart-breaking to all those who gathered round,
To hear him cry he *must* come out, or he'd be surely drowned!

Yes! it is true he kept up such a loud lamenting noise
That soon were gathered round that pond the idle village boys;
Alas! how many weeds threw heavy shadows near the bank—
And *would* his cruel mother grieve, he wondered, if he sank?

And still he heard her quacking—"You *must* swim,"—and he obeyed—
For she had taught him—*once*—that by a spade she *meant* a spade!
"Yes! *you must swim*" again she quacked and—swim about he did,
To find how good a thing it is to *do as you are bid*!

For soon he swam out with his brothers—swam about all day—
To learn to feel that he could swim as cleverly as they!
Oh! thus he learnt a lesson it is always well to learn,
Never from lessons of good Dame Experience to turn!

WHAT THE JAY SAID TO THE BLACKBIRD.

OH! what do you think the jaunty jay
Once shrieked to the blackbird one fine day!
"Oh! you are the ugliest bird," quoth he,
"That ever stole from a cherry tree!"

You are only black, and without a speck
Of gay blue ribbon your breast to deck!
Were you bright like me you might well be proud!"
Called he, with a voice both shrill and loud!

But the blackbird said, in that voice so clear
And sweet that we all delight to hear—
"Alas! I'm afraid you're a vain old thing,
For you quite forget that you cannot sing.

"If you open your mouth you are driven away—
While people will listen to *me* all day—
You make, all know, but a hideous *screech*,
When you try to display *your* gift of speech.

"'Tis true I am dark—that my bill is yellow,
That *you* are, indeed, a handsome fellow,
And the world, no doubt, hath a right to say
No bird is so bright as our jaunty jay.

"But what if they add — 'O! fair, blue bird,
Let your voice in song, we pray, be heard—
'Tis summer, in all our woods and bowers,
And the bees are busy amongst the flowers.'"

And the jaunty jay was vexed and mum!
As one who is suddenly struck dumb—
He was quite at a loss what next to say,
And at last with a scream he flew away.

And a mouse peeped out of a little hole,
To learn what the noise and talk might be—
And the blackbird smiled—and his dinner stole,
From a tempting branch of a cherry tree!

WHAT THE WORLD SAID TO THE BLACKBIRD AND THE JAY!

"DARK little bird, with the bill so yellow—
We hold you to be but an ugly fellow!
Why are you not as the bright, blue jay—
We could sit by his nest, methinks, all day?"

But one fine day, as they paused beside
The nest that they almost watched with pride—
(Since—though there was not a little litter,
Their eyes were attracted but by glitter,

So that they only looked to note
Those fair, blue feathers below his throat,
That covered the curve of his handsome breast
And forgot to look at the rude-made nest)—

They cried—"You beautiful azure thing!
Oh! pray let us hear how you can sing;
For you, as a creature of such fair shine,
Must surely possess a voice divine!"

And even as the flattering plea was heard
Came a shriek that startled each listening bird—
And, scattering each and all away,
Far out of the greenwood flew the jay!

And he dreamt that his neighbours all
were filled
With a sweet delight his voice to hear—
That his piercing scream their songs had stilled
Because they had none so sweet and clear.

Then the blackbird sang—and oh! each note,
Poured out from his rich, melodious throat,
So delighted and charmed all those that heard
That they cried—"Was ever so sweet a bird!"

And they saw that their judgment had been poor,
That things that glitter are not the best!
And they courted the showy jay no more,
But sat all day near the blackbird's nest.

THE BOY AND THE SWALLOW.

THE LESSON OF UNSELFISH LOVE.

BESIDE the placid waters of the beautiful blue sea
A lonely boy was wandering, as the sun went slowly down,
And he caught a gentle swallow, and he cried—"Oh! stay with me
In my grand and handsome dwelling in the large and busy town!"

"I will give you food and shelter when the wintry winds are cold,
When the reckless and uncared for are out battling with the storm,
And your bars shall be of silver, or of bright and polished gold,
And all about your dwelling place shall handsome be and warm."

"Ah! let me fly back home!" was yet the captive bird's reply—
"Oh! let me fly back home to my own nest within the caves—
I know not, if I leave them long, but that my friends will die—
And for their sakes I fear not either stormy winds or waves:

"Ah! let me fly back home, for you may
tire of me ere long;
And find that there are others in the
world more fair than I,
And when you weary of my plumage,
weary of my song,
Ah! nothing will be left for me, except
that hour to die!"

He let her go without a word, for his was
not the heart
Unwilling captives even in the fairest
home to keep,
For ever pining to be free; he took the
nobler part—
And smiled to hear her song, as she
flew homewards o'er the deep!

THE WEASEL;

OR,

THE WISE OF THE WORLD.

WE know that of the weasel, dears, it
often has been stated,
In tones of firm conviction, not in words
exaggerated—
That be it in the early hours, or be it in
the night,
The weasel *always* sleeps with one eye
open to the light!

Yet once we scarce believed the fact—and
so, to make things certain,
One eve we sought the creature's nest and
peeped behind the curtain,
And found it true, we must admit—that
wicked, *wicked* eye
Was open as an eagle's and upturned to-
wards the sky!

His mind, he then explained, was far too
full of projects deep,
His brain too full of knowledge just to
sleep as fools might sleep!
'Twas plain his faith in his own wisdom
never could be shaken,
And we at once gave up the task we'd
vainly undertaken.

Yes! had he slept as soundly as a maggot
in a nut
We saw he'd ne'er confess that he had
slept with both eyes shut!
Like some we know he vowed that he was
always "wide awake,"
And knew, though none might tell him,
every step a foe would take!

For one *hath* met with people who esteem
themselves so wise,
They always sleep, unlike their friends,
with keenly open eyes!
And read, they boast, the meanings of all
things beneath the sun,
And more!—can wisely preach on every
act the world has done!

"We see right well, besides," — quoth
they, "what *next* the world *will* do,
"Just now it minces in its gait—it wears
a pinching shoe,
And thinks that all should imitate that
wondrous, cautious tread—"
And if you can believe in this—then—
everything is said!

Oh! it is units, as we know, that make a
mighty crowd,
Each wants to follow others—oft of follow-
ing is proud!
Each adds unto the steps that lead to *one*
convenient gate,
And that by not the narrow, but the broad
path and the straight!

THE VAIN LITTLE MOUSE!

OR,

"'TIS VANITY, OH VANITY, THAT LEADS THE WORLD ASTRAY!"

OH! once upon a time there was a *very*
tiny mouse,
And it chanced that he his "tent had
pitched" within a merchant's house;
'Twas fifty times too big for such a little
one as he,
Where countless friends of his might dwell
and snug as maggots be!

But, alas! he was a creature that was
not a little vain,
And it chanced he met a lovely *belle*, one
fine but luckless day,
And he thought how fine a figure he might
cut if in her train.
'Twas Vanity, oh! Vanity, that led his
steps astray!

Oh! the beautiful young pussy—*Oh!* she
gave him such a smile!
And she looked so very pretty, and she
seemed so free from guile,
And she softly arched her tail and then
she smoothed her silken cheek,
While she purred to him so sweetly when
he, blushing, tried to speak!

Yet though she seemed so frolicsome she
was not *quite* a kitten!
And in the annals of the Silly *we* know
what is written!
It is not to the wise of earth, but chiefly
to the weak,
That Pussies ape the manners of the
humble and the meek!

And alas! she was his ruin, and he sighed,
as days passed o'er,
For the pure and soothing conscience that
his mind possessed before;
Aye! now he spent his hours in treading
Pleasure's giddy maze,
And then all ended! in the saddest,
darkest of all ways!

But why should we pursue the theme, the
painful subject, more?
'Tis an experience often suffered from,
that all deplore,
That Beauty can be treacherous — that
Beauty can deceive—
Are lessons often preached and yet, it
seems, that few believe!

For men are but as mice, we know, and
not a little vain!

And if they meet a lovely *belle* upon
some luckless day,
They think how fine a figure they might
cut if in her train!

'Tis Vanity! oh, Vanity! that leads the
world astray!

THE LADY AND THE REPTILE.

(N.B.—*Be careful in the choice of
your friends.*)

A PARABLE.

IN the mansions of the Great,
In the noble halls of State,
Once a simple little lady sat at dinner,
every day—
All dishes to entice,
All viands sweet and nice,
Were carefully before her placed, I've
heard her servants say.

On very many days,
Did those servants—beyond praise,
Serve that lady sitting sadly at that noble
table's *top*—
'Twas a very "wedding feast"—
Or so they *said*—at least—
With nothing that had twice been served,
like hash, or stew, or slop!

And yet—ah! yet I fear,
One thing to us is clear—
That even if the morning shall be beauti-
ful and bright,
Too often is its *close*
The beginning of our woes!—
And we hear the tempest howling through
the darker hours of night!

Alas! it was not long
Ere something went *so* wrong!—
For the little lady lost her bloom, and
then she lost her strength,
For from the realms below—
From realms none care to know,
Came every day a viper—one of beauty
and of length!

As sure as any sinner
This viper came to dinner
On every day in summer-time to share
that lady's meal!
Until at last he knew,
As we said—not hash, nor stew,
But the taste of haunch of venison and of
dainty breast of veal!

Then he coiled beneath the sun—
 And his hours, if not of fun,
 Were full of sweet and calm content, the
 better thing by far!
 And he winked his wicked eyes
 At the light of August skies,
 But crept away and hid, through all the
 reign of moon and star!

And so sleek he grew and fat—
 And so slimy and *all that*,
 That soon he could'n't contain himself, for
 vanity and pride—
 And the world rolled on—at least,
 I should say the months increased—
 So did the viper's size—but then the little
 lady died!

THE JAUNTY LITTLE DOG.

"My *dear* miss pussy cat," said doggie,
 "do'e, do'e come
 And catch some little mice with me—don't
 always stay at home!"
 But little pussy clung
 To the bolster of her bed,
 "O no, I am too young
 To go hunting yet"—she said;
 "I'll wait till I am stronger and *then* it
 will be nice,
 To go hunting with my mammy and catch-
 ing little mice.

"Did we go far from home,
 Don't you see, a wolf might come!
 Or a tiger, who short work of you, I fear,
 my friend, would make—
 And where should I be, then—
 Why he'd take *me* to his den!
 And every one of my poor bones the
 wicked one would break!"

But little doggie shook his ears, for far
 too proud was he
 To listen to a silly little pussy—don't you
 see!

With a very jaunty air,
 With his tail most tightly curled,
 With a bark of "*I don't care!*"
 He went across the world!
 But nothing can I ever add to this—my
 tale is o'er—
 For that jaunty little dog, alas! was seen
 at home no more!

A STORY OF THE "CAT WORLD!"

"O! *dear* Mrs. Mousie—I've come here
 to tell you
 That *you* may come with me—O! *no one*
 will smell you!
 The butler by this time is safe in his bed,
 And I doubt if he'd now hear his Own
 Master's tread!

"And come by yourself—deary—it is far
 best
 To leave all your little ones safe in their
 nest!
 And let not your grandmother hear the
 least clatter —
 For she is *so* sharp and might ask —
 'What's the matter!'"

But 'our little matron — be this under-
 stood—
 Was not like the world!—she was modest
 and good!
 So she paused for some seconds and looked
 very wise,
 Then turned to her tempter—with fearless,
 bright eyes!

"My good man," she said, "is away, and
 I fear,
 Wouldn't like me to go out unless he were
 here—
 Who knows but the dog, who is let loose
 at night,
 Might give dear old granny a terrible
 fright!

"And this is *his* mother—of *very great*
 age—
 If anything hurt her he'd be in a rage!
 Oh! I'd better wait for the 'turn of
 affairs,'—
 No doubt I shall soon hear his steps on the
 stairs!"

And so with a sigh, if a *very* small sigh,
 She turned on her bed and she shut up
 one eye—
 But *one*—for *some* mice seem to think it
 a crime
 To shut up *both* optics in sleep, at a time!

And we *should* observe, to be quite understood,
That she spoke through a hole in a wainscot of wood,
Where not even pussy's strong claws could intrude,
And even to try it were needlessly rude!

So pussy, disconsolate, sauntered away
To bide her own time, or by night or by day—

When it might be that poor granny-mouse
should lie dead,

So her grandchild no longer need watch
by her bed!

And whether that time came shall never
be told!

(Although it is likely — as granny *was*
old!—)

And whether in *that* case vile pussy was
gainer

By eating poor mousie *we will not make*
plainer!

ANOTHER STORY OF THE "CAT-WORLD!"

OR,

A LITTLE TIMON OF ATHENS!

THERE was once a little cat,
Who became so very fat
It was quite beyond her strength to even
tease a tiny mouse!
All the day, *when not asleep*,
She was seen to slowly creep
In and out, or round the cupboards she
could find about the house.

She was happy, so they say—
For she little cared for play—
Or it may be she had lost the buoyant
spring of "other days!"
But a kitten's frisky game
Now inspired her with such shame,
That she simply jeered her sisters for the
rudeness of their ways.

In the pantry was a corner—
Where that greedy boy, Jack
Horner,
Might pop the plums into his mouth and
nobody could chide!

Such a place for prunes and plums,
And the toothy figs of "drums"!
O, a cupboard of *all* cupboards where a
happy mouse might hide!

Truly happy was one week,
For she grew *so* fat and sleek,
And although it seemed imprudent she
kept purring with delight!
For she thought to hold that place
For a future happy race—
One that some day might be hers—until—
alas! one hapless night!—

Lo! a dog was slyly placed
Where there nothing was to taste,
Save a dry and meatless bone and sundry
crusts of mouldy bread—
O, a dog so very lean—
O, a dog so sharp and keen,
Who would even commit a *murder* for a
supper—it was said!

'Twas a time of frightful danger,
And we doubt not, *if* a stranger,
Had pussy been an easy prey and none
had known her fate—
But her eyes desried a hole
In a cellar, full of coal—
One moment, and she darted in! *one more*
had been too late!

The dog, 'tis true, might bark,
But the cellar was so dark
That he could not see his enemy, nor
where she stood at bay—
And cats, we know, are able—
Like a certain Prince in sable—
To see as well in darkness as in perfect
light of day!

And the dog remained till late,
Quite resolved to watch and wait,
In the hopes to "spring a mine" upon his
enemy at last!
Ah! but *she*, too, could be wise!
And she *fixed* him with her eyes,
Till his patience was exhausted and his
supper hour grew late.

Yet—when she crept once more,
To the friends she knew before,
They sent her off in anger—in a passion—
much we fear!

"For"—said they—"the friend *we*
knew
Was no shabby thing like *you*—
Go back to your own quarters—we allow
no strangers here!"

For, alas! when we are worn
With a conflict, and are torn
By the anguish we have suffered, which has
aged our very features,
The friends we knew before
Will believe in us no more—
For the world, say some, is but a world
of cold and selfish creatures.

AGAIN—A PUSSY OF THE WORLD AND THE "STAY-AT-HOME" PUSSY!

"My good Mrs. Scratcher—I've nothing
at all
To amuse me, so pray let us go for a call!
You can leave all your little ones safe in
their bed,
With their suppers all eaten—their lessons
all said!

"Or let's seek the cellar, for there may be
many
A fat little mouse in some corner to find—
That you shall catch *one*, I will bet you
a penny,
For something smells nice even here, to
my mind!"

"No—thanks!" says old Scratcher, "I'll
stay here at home,
As I promised to do, for "*papa*" * soon
will come,
With some bread and some milk, in a
very large dish—
You may catch all the mice, ma'am, your-
self, if you wish!"

You see that our pussy cats know how to
speak—
As well as to purr, when the little mice
squeak;
And they know how to scratch and they
know how to mew,
Much better than I can—or *even* than
you!

There were plenty of books in her master's
large house,
Which pussy would tear up, in search for
a mouse,
But never a book had old pussy cat read,
Though she sometimes stole leaves for her
little one's bed!

And 'tis easy for all little children—by
that—
To see what a stupid, or lazy old cat,
Each one of these pussies must certainly
be—
Since none of them had ever learnt
A, B, C!

THE ADVENTUROUS MOUSE;

OR,

TOO BOLD BY HALF!

ONCE there lived a little mouse
In a mighty handsome house,
That was twenty times too big for such a
very little mite—
But he whispered—"Ha! you know,
There are lots of rooms below,
And countless little corners, too, and holes
that hide me *quite*!"

"I could *never* bear a place
Where you may not run a race
With your brothers and your sisters in
the cellar, O!
For your pretty *little* house
Is NO dwelling for a mouse—
There is scarce a crack in which to hide
a fellow, O!

He was something of a swell,
So he didn't know how to spell!
And therefore was uncertain how the word
should sound, you see!
And he wore a languid air,
With a sort of "I don't care—
There's none, you know, who's so genteel
as *me*!—As *ME*!"

For he knew but little grammar,
Though had fashion but a stammer,
He, no doubt, had stammered even in his
squealing and his squeak—

* "Papa," we imagine, meant "the master of the house."

For he followed fashion's ways,
Like the mice of olden days,
And tried, in all the tones of *true* gentility
to speak.

The back stairs he would shun
When his mind was for a run—
But up and down the grand front staircase
took his little trot—
Till it happened, one fine day,
Mrs. Pussy passed that way—
And after *that* sad hour, *alas!* his
country knew him not!

THE GIDDY FLY AND THE WORKING BEE.

SAID a giddy fly to a working Bee,
As he sat on a sweet acacia tree:
"You toil too much on this beautiful day;
Come out in the sunshine, friend, and
play!

"For the time will come when the rose
lies dead—
When the leaves of the forest all are shed:
Why spend all your time in thus hoarding
up treasure,
When around you lies spread such a banquet
of pleasure!

"Let's rejoice in the bloom of all beautiful
things—
Old stupid, come out for a spree on your
wings!
To work hard in weather like this, sir,
seems funny—
Leave off—while the days are so cheerful,
so sunny!

"O! yes—you are foolish to waste all
these hours—
We may soon have the winds, and the
gloom, and the showers!
See the bird and the butterfly—happy and
bright—
How they sport—how they flirt—in the
warm sunlight!"

The Bee—though intent on collecting his
store,
Left work for one moment—one moment,
no more!

For to answer each idler who chooses to
ask
Foolish questions like these were indeed
a hard task!

Yes! he left off his work, as we just now
have said,
And facing his questioner lifted his head,
And answered him thus—in a musical
buz—

"Your questions are somewhat *too* trifling,
dear Coz!

"I will not deny that in one thing you're
right—

It is daylight, just now, but it soon will
be night!

O friend! while the sky is thus peaceful
and sunny,

'*Twere well if we—all of us—gathered
our honey!*

"All wise ones will labour while weather
is fine—

And the work of this life, sir, is not all
sunshine,

And the day will arrive, as you say—when
the flowers

Will all be found withered, or *dead*, in
their bowers!

"And where should *we* be, with no store
—with no home,

When the storms of the north sky all
howling have come,

When even sweet clover is hidden by
snow—

And nothing but grass in the meadows
can grow!"

"You're a fool!" said the Fly, in a
mighty sharp tone,

For his temper felt ruffled—"then work,
sir, alone!

Go back to your drudgery—I will be wiser
Than follow the counsels of *such* an ad-
viser!

"For you, in a word, are a great deal
'too clever'—

Though, of *course*, hath the sunshine ne'er
lasted for ever—

But still it may serve through our *own*
little time—

And to spend it in drudgery I call a
crime!"

He flew off in a huff, and he buzzed as he flew—
As though he would say — “Precious stupid are you!
And while you are feeding on wax, or bee-bread,
I’ll feed on a peach!” And he did as he said!

But, alas! came a day when the summer had passed—
When the skies of the autumn were cold and o’ercast!
Then the storms gathered o’er, and the fly lay dead—
But the bee was safe in his waxen bed!

ANOTHER STORY OF THE “CAT WORLD!”

OR

THE WISE LITTLE RAT.

“My dear little friend! won’t you come out to tea,
And share all the dainties just spread out for me?
You’ll find all the dishes selected are good—
Both daintily cooked and the choicest of food!

“Though *I* am no hypocrite—making no show,
I am really, at *heart*, your *best friend*, you must know!
Yes! though unpretentious, I’m truly that friend
Who would willingly, always, your pleasure attend!

“Oh! the day will be one of great pride, sir, for me,
When you, in my company, *join in a spree!*
There’s a Play that is now being played—let us go
To the *Grand Tier*—for all the *rude* folks sit below!

“Yes! we are all going, sir—I, and some others—
Some excellent souls, sir, who all are like brothers;

And who with the best of the house, sir, will sit,
To see a new Play—one of excellent wit!”

Now this little rat had been very well taught,
And before he would *answer* he carefully *thought*—
And remembered his mother had said,
“Don’t go out
Till you know where you’re going, and what it’s about!

“Above all, remember, to run *fast away*,
Should any entice you to peep at a *Play!*
For nothing more wicked hath ever been known,
Though I speak but from hearsay, my dear,
I must own!

“And I *should* like a peep, I confess, some fine day—
To see if all’s true that some wise people say;
But I know that such longings, my dear, are not wise—
It is better to turn from the wicked our eyes!”

So this little rat most demurely then said:
“O, thanks—Mrs. Puss—but it’s time now for bed—
Besides—there’s no doubt I had better not go—
And if I ask mother I’m *sure* she’ll say *no!*”

O, think, sir, had you been that same little rat,
Had you answered as neatly and wisely as that?
And e’en as he spoke he went “whisk” through a crack—
And well Pussy knew he would never come back.

So she—as she caught the last sound of his tread,
Said words it is better she never had said!
Nay! she screamed in her fury, but screaming was vain,
For he sought not the friendship of Pussy again!

Now, if *you* an example so wise would
 but follow—
 Example so simple—example so bright—
 The friendship of worldlings—so empty
 and hollow,
 Would lead you no more to the regions of
 night!

LITTLE TOMMY.

MOST HASTE—WORST SPEED!

LITTLE Tommy was quick—far too quick
 on his legs
 To be safe on his errands, as some might
 declare;
 And one day he went with a basket of
 eggs,
 To sell for his mother at Hitchin's great
 fair.

And she said, "See you're careful to keep
 out of harm

And to walk very slowly the whole of
 the way—

And only to rest at old Farmer Bigg's
 farm."

*But the little boy wanted to get back
 to play!*

And he thought no one saw him—that he
 was alone—

Or only was seen by some busy field-
 bird—

So he ran on so fast that he tripped on a
 stone,

And broke every egg in his basket, I've
 heard!

For all those fresh eggs, little Tommy was
 told,

As the bitter tears streamed down each
 puffy, red cheek—

Would have brought enough silver, had
 they but been sold,

To have kept him in puddings for many
 a week!

For many a day was his dinner but bread—
 And in all that he did he was scolded
 and chidden—

And "never no more" was he careless,
 they said,

But henceforth did always the thing he
 was bidden!

THE SILLY LITTLE PIG.

THERE was once a little pig,
 With such *very* tiny eyes,
 Though his *mouth* was truly big,
 Of, indeed, the largest size!

And he wanted to get "stout,"
 Like his mother, as he said!
 So he wouldn't stroll about,
 But would always keep his bed.

And his meals he kept repeating,
 Twice as often as another!
 He was never tired of eating,
 As he boasted—*like his mother!*

Thus—(and whether he was willing
 Or was not, was little matter—)
 The sad end of all this swilling,
 Of this ever growing fatter—

Was—that one day, as they tell,
 From his slumbers rudely waken—
 While the whole world heard his yell—
To the butcher he was taken.

For he could not run away—
 He was fifty times too fat—
 Thus—he fell an easy prey:
 Thus—*this* is the end of *that!*

NOW THERE WAS ANOTHER PIG!

Now there was another pig,
 Who was growing rather big,
 So he'd root up no more carrots with
his nose—he said—

But his mother warned him —
 "Now!

'Tis no use to make a row,
 Or I'll send you off this moment, sir! to
 bed—sir! to bed!"

And they heard her say—"My Billy,
 He is always rather silly—
 Like his idiotic father, who would never
 learn his letters;
 If he *would* but only speak
 In the *sweetest* little squeak
 He could certainly, and always, hold his
 head up with his betters!

"For my Billy is no fool—
So I'll send him off to school—
And they'll teach him how to read, and
they'll teach him how to write—
And they'll show him how to sing,
Like a pooty-icky thing,
A ducky-itty song, to cheer his mummies
kins at night!"

But Billy was so naughty—
He said—"I *won't* be taught"—he
Was *very* rude indeed, a foolish thing like
this to say!

For little pigs, *all* know,
Should a *little* breeding show,
And *never* speak to any one in *such* a
saucy way!

He said—yes! Billy said,
"You had better go to bed—
You're too old and you're too *stupid*,
ma'am, to run about, or trot—
You have got too big a snout—
You're too fat to crawl about—
You're only fit to eat—ma'am—to boil up
in a pot!"

Oh! his mammy was *so* cross
That she seemed quite at a loss
How to punish him enough to make him
cry! cry! cry!
When a boy came with a stick—
Oh! *no*—it wasn't *thick*!
Yet our piggy ran—lamenting, to his styel
stye! stye!

Some might wonder that his mother
Took no steps to make a pother,
Or to run between that farm boy's legs and
throw him to the ground!
But her son had been so rude
That she squealed—"I won't intrude,"
With something in her voice that had a
half-contented sound!

"Besides"—she silyly thought,
"Now this lesson he is taught,
He'll learn to be more civil, or I'll know
the reason why!"

And as the boy went past
It is even said she cast
A knowing wink from one small corner of
her eye!

No doubt she *tried* to say,
Every time he passed her way—
"Dear boy—your lesson was a very proper
one to read!
And surely, 'tis a fact,
If the world like *you* would act,
What a happy — *too-too* happy life its
parents then might lead!

"But—as you've seen to-day,
Sir! our children won't obey,
Sir! the kindest of orders of their very
nearest friend!
But hold themselves far wiser
Than their parent and adviser—
O! the age is one of folly—and I *don't*
know how 'twill end!"

Thinking thus she breathed some
sighs—
Next she turned her weary eyes
From the pig-stye to the pea-stack and
seemed about to weep—
But a better thing decided!
Just her supper hour abided!
Then ate her fill most heartily, and calmly
went to sleep!

A BETTER SORT OF PIGGY!

OH! once *more* we knew a pig—
And he wasn't "*quite* too big!"
Yet grunted — though so small he *was* a
piggy all the same!
And he had such *little* eyes—
And they said he wasn't wise—
For he would not, when they asked him,
tell to *any* one his name!

Yet—though making no pretence,
Piggy *had* some little sense—
When he saw his little brother was sent
"right away," to bed,*
He perceived that stick might strike
Rather more than he would like—
So—"I think—that I will also go to
rest," he silyly said!

* For he belonged to the same pigstye as the piggy of the preceding page.

And now they *really* sleep!
 And the little mice may creep
 In and out and all about—for they haven't
 got a light—
 But the little piggies snore
 As they never did before—
 So let them sleep, poor piggies, and we'll
 wish them all—Good-night!

THE DOG OF BRAG!

THERE was a saucy puppy dog who *would*
 go out to play
 "All by himself," he proudly said—one
 hot, one July day—
 Although his mother often gravely *begged*
 him not to go,
 Unless he went *with her* — into "that
 wicked world"—you know!

"Old folks"—quoth he—"are silly! they
 are always so afraid
 Lest they should chance to see some
 'bogie,' lurking in the shade—
 And though the sun may even shine par-
 ticularly bright,
 They're frightened by the merest shadow,
 coming in its light!"

He had not long been on the road before
 he met a cat—

'Twas little that he cared, as one can
quite believe, for *that*!

Indeed he promptly drove the frightened
 creature up a tree—

And who so proud of such a feat of
 bravery as he!

And as he gaily gambolled, loudly barking
 on his way,

And made—when'er he could, all weak
 and trembling things his prey,

He laughed to think, he barked to think,
 with much unfilial glee,

What *would* his timid parents say, if only
 they could see!

Yet—when he met another dog, a dog of
 noble size,

He did not wait to see he had but kind
 and friendly eyes,

That there was nothing terrible and cruel
 about his jaw,

But that he was *so big* appeared the only
 thing he saw!

And so he rushed off with a yelp, as fast
 as he could go—

The other only smiled and seemed the silly
 fool to know;

He gravely, calmly, went his way, as we
 have heard it said,

And did not even trouble once to turn his
 stately head!

GRAVE MORAL REFLECTION!

Dogs are like human beings — *such* a
 mixture!

Some work for love and some if—you com-
 mand 'em—

And, as with human dogs—"look on this
 picture,

And then on that"—if you would under-
 stand 'em!

Away from danger never at a loss
 To brag and boast, beneath a smiling sky,
 But if GOLIATH should their pathway
 cross,

Unlike young David of the past—*they fly!*

THE GOAT AND THE DOG;

OR,

FREEDOM VERSUS LUXURY.

"OH! you *poor* little goat!" said a very
 fat dog,

"I pity you more than I ever can say—
 Look at me! I have nothing to do but to
 jog

By the side of my master, on every fine
 day!

"For me there is plenty to drink and to
 eat—

I have delicate bones—I have gravy and
 meat;

But the grass here is withered, or trampled
 and stony—

No wonder your body is skinny and bony!"

"Don't pity me, master!" the Billy goat
 said,

"For I have a sweet little home and a bed—
 I may not have gravy and meat, it is true,
 Still—I *have* no chain on my neck, Sir,
like you!

"And there is no whistle to call *me*, you know,
Or a spy at my footsteps wherever I go—
So I would not be *you*—be it *well* understood,
No! in spite of your master's *most* delicate food!"

And he tossed up his beard, so untrimmed
and so grey,
That no barber had touched, and then went
on his way;
And the other looked after him long, but
indeed,
That expression of his was not easy to
read!

It might be regret, or it might be disgust—
That meant—"if you *will* be a donkey,
you *must*!"
But stretched at full length in his kennel
he lay,
And he uttered no bark for the rest of the
day!

On food for reflection no doubt he had
seized,
Even if, it might be, food for envy, as
well—
But if he were angered, or if he were
pleased,
No one by his *bark*, as we've mentioned,
could tell!

THE PUNISHMENT OF INDOLENCE;

OR,

THE FROG AND THE CAT.

THERE was once a little frog,
Who became so wide and thick,
One perceived he could not jog
Unless you pushed him with a
stick!
All he cared to do each day was to sit
beside a log,
And hide himself as best he could from
pussy-cat or dog.

And *all* things laughed to see,
What goggle-eyes had he!
O! they almost started out,
Every time he turned about!

For "hop about and turn about and jump
—Jim Crow,"
As an old-fashioned song once said, was
not for him, you know!

But, ah! there came a day
When a cat crept by that way—
And she spied poor froggy, half-concealed
and squatting in the grass,
Though motionless he sat,
He could *not* escape that cat,
Quite the fiercest in the neighbourhood,
one heard it said, alas!

Ah! never, never more,
Shall those that paused before,
Now pause to hear his melodies as by
the log he lay—
No! never more his croak
On the solemn silence broke—
For he to other lands had gone — *they*
guessed not by which way!

THE FLY AND THE PEACH.

A FLY once went on a friend to call,
When he spied a peach on a garden wall—
"'Tis the very fairest peach," quoth he,
"That ever I saw on a wall fruit tree!"

So many a day on the peach he sat,
And he drank and he ate and became so
fat!
While the other insects tried in vain
To lure him back to their world again!

And the little gnats came singing past,
And an eager glance on the peach they
cast,
But he fiercely flew at the tiny crowd—
For it was *his* property, he avowed!

But one fine morning a youth came by,
And cast on the wall a searching eye,
Then lifted an eager hand to reach,
And claim for himself this beautiful peach!

But the fly stuck on like a very *burr*—
In truth he was far too fat to stir—
Till he felt a strong and an angry hand,
That struck him down in the dust and
sand!

And so he died, for a heavy foot
On his fluttering wings at once was put—
He perished! like others in life, indeed!
From the love of idleness and greed!

WHAT THE STARVED PONY SAID.

THERE was once a little pony,
And he was so *very* bony,
That they said to cross a field he scarce
was able;
But he *neighed* out to his master,
"Sir! I *know* I could go faster
Than any horse that you have in your
stable!

"*Only*—master—be so good
As to give me more of food,
And water fresh—whenever I come back
From work, for it is long
Since I've tasted food more *strong*
Than some musty-fusty hay, from a musty-
fusty stack."

Then they gave him food, and soon
He was busy—morn and noon,
And remembered well his promise, don't
you know!

Uphill and downhill, he
Went as fast as fast could be—
So they never more complained that he
was slow! O no!
*They never more complained that he was
slow!*

Aye! see you feed your beast,
If you *work* expect, at least,
O treat him like a pony *and* a brother!
Then he'll surely take his part
With a glad and grateful heart—
For one good turn, you know, deserves
another! O yes!
For one good turn, *of course*, deserves
another!

THE ADVENTURES OF THREE LITTLE KITTENS.

A "NONSENSE STORY."

THREE little kittens went out to sea
On the back of a Mullagatorny!
They were as pretty as pretty could be,
While *she* was ugly and horny!

They thought they would drink of the
wave of the sea,

But they found that it made them sick!
It was salty and frothy as waves could be,
And muddy besides and thick!

But they purred—"We have some beauti-
ful cream

In the boat"—and they felt quite glad!
But ah! it proved a delusive dream,
'Twas the nastiest thing they had!

It was musty and dusty and curdled and
sour,

And dirty as dirt could be—
So they sighed and they cried and they
wept by the hour,
Till the moon went down on the sea!

Then they all determined to learn to
swim,

For fear that the boat should be
grounded—

But they found that their eyes with tears
were dim,

For they thought that they might be
drowned.

So they said—"We'll all climb on to the
back

Of our Mullagatorny friend,"
But she was angry and gave them the sack,
And ate them all in the end!

Nevertheless they all came home
With their noses, hands and feet on—
While Mullagatorny was caught by a
gnome,
And made a Christmas treat *on!*

It took out his teeth and crept down his
throat,

And furred about inside,
Till Mullagatorny fell out of the boat,
And the kittens came home on the tide!

Their mother was all agog, when she saw
Her children come sailing along—
And she took up her tail in her right-hand
paw,
And squealed out a sea-faring song! she
did—

With a meow—

And a cheow—

And a wheow—

And a yeow—

She kicked up a horrible row—she
did!

Oh! she kicked up a horrible row!

Now children all, and mothers, too,
Come listen, while I swear
That if such things as these you do,
You'll go, you don't know where!*

THE GOOD LITTLE DOGGIE.

COME—good little doggie—let's go for a
walk—

For I like you with me, so, because you
don't talk!

And yet my good doggie knows well how
to play,

He will wag his long tail and will frisk
all the way!

But he won't let a strange little dog come
with me—

I believe that he says to him—"Who may
you be!

We don't want a stranger to hang about
Us!

So be off at once, sir, and don't make a
fuss!"

And then the strange Bow-wow soon
scampers away,

And *my* little Bow-wow goes on with his
play—

And when he sees two naughty dogs in a
fight,

He looks at them, thinking, I'm sure—
"*That's* not right!"

For, of course, it is true that he did not
quite say so—

But he turned up his tail and went trotting
away—so—

Thus good little doggie goes with me to
walk—

For I like him far better than things that
will talk!

I've plenty of time then to hunt for wild
flowers—

To look for the greenfinches' nests in the
bowers—

To cover my fingers with dewberry stains,
And find all things pretty in woods and in
lanes!

SENSIBLE LITTLE JACK;

OR,

THE TEMPTER AND THE CHILD.

"O LITTLE one, come out and play—
It is a shame on such a day
To stay within a stuffy house,
As though you were a 'cupboard mouse!'

"The air is warm—the wind is still—
The water rests below the mill—
The cows are sleeping in the grass,
The clouds scarce shadow as they pass!

"For all the sky hath summer's blue—
And there is neither rain nor dew;
And you are all alone—I see—
Come out into the woods *with me!*"

"Nay!" said the child—"but if I come,
So far, so *very* far from home—
Into those mighty woods to play,
I fear that I should lose my way!"

In vain his tempter tried to plead—
In vain he hoped he might succeed
By drawing pictures of the pleasure
The world might grant him without
measure.

He staunchly still refused to go,
Unless, at least, his friends might know,
And this the elder boy refused—
The very thought of it abused!

"Why ask of them—the stupid heads!
It is their way to love a fuss—
Come! let them slumber in their beds,
For they would only bother us!"

* NOTE.—These lines were improvised one evening by "Grandpapa," in answer to an imperative request from two little grandchildren for a "nonsense story." They proved to be, as "penny-a-liners" say—"eminently successful." It is, we may state, the only one *not* written by the author of the book. We do not pretend to know what a Mullagatorny is—probably some antediluvian monster, returned on Nature's *modern* hands.

It *might* have been the child had yielded,
But at that moment came mama
Upon the little stage—and wielded
A power that sent the Tempter far!

It was a *whip*, as *some* believe—
Although the *beaten* ne'er would tell!
A whip!—a thing that won't deceive,
But *sharply* does its task and well!

And mammy, to reward her boy,
Gave him at *once* a lovely toy,
And promised she would never scold
him
So that he did *just what she told him!*

THE REWARD OF JOHN BULL'S LITTLE BOY.

ONE day, when John Bull's little boy ran
out
Across the new-mown fields, he heard a
shout
Of small school children—then the piteous
mew
As of a kitten his attention drew.

He stopped to listen, when the cheer of
boys
Added a well-known meaning to the noise!
Then went his footsteps, fast as they
could patter,
Right through the hay, to learn what was
the matter!

And then he saw some children "from the
town,"
Trying a kitten in the pond to drown;
And of whose ownership no one would
boast—
'Twas thin and meagre as a "whipping-
post!"

Indeed it looked a creature sadly worn,
And much of fur had from her neck been
torn—
Her ears were cropped, and it appeared
that quite
By half, her tail was shortened, as by
spite!

He was a brave young lad, and drove
away
These cruel, unfeeling schoolboys from
their prey,

And took puss home and placed her by
the fire,
Until her dripping paws and skin were
drier.

So kindly for the poor thing did he feel,
He even gave her half his evening meal—
Then brought her buttermilk from
"mother's dairy,"
And in all things behaved as her "good
fairy!"

I do not know if this young, unread cat,
Looked at the thing in any light like that!
Still—she with proper feeling seemed im-
bued—
And made much "purr" to show her
gratitude!

When e'er she heard his footsteps in the
house
She flew to him — as though he were a
mouse!
And I may ask you, *could* a pussy cat
Show greater signs of promptitude than
that!

And she would sit upon his knee and
purr—
And lick the hand that stroked her silken
fur—
And seemed to care for little save to be
Forgetful of all mice, upon his knee!

Nor was this all—for everybody knows,
While she was there no rat of sniffing nose
Was ever seen to roam about the place,
Or in the bins and cellars run a race.

The larder now in every part was neat,
Untouched was all it held of nice and
sweet!
And he, who pussy saved, oft showed his
friends
How sweetly charity with profit blends!

THE SILLY LITTLE COWARD.

"I HEAR on the staircase a very strange
noise!"
One evening said one of two scared little
boys;
"For something that's frightful, but what
I don't know,
Is making the strangest of noises below.

"And I can't even think, as I kneel, of
my prayers,
For the scratching that comes up from
under the stairs;
O! never before have I heard sound so
evil!
Good brother—*dear* brother! it must be
the devil!"

"Look out!" said the boy who was older
—"let's see,
At least, what this rushing and scrambling
may be—
'Tis folly to tremble like this, and—I *say*!
What a baby you are—fit for nothing but
play!"

But the child scarcely heard and stood
shivering still—
For he feared he knew not what strange
"figure of ill,"
The roses had fled from his poor little
cheek—
'Twas all he could do not to cry out—or
shriek!

At last he took heart! with a very pale
face
He went through the passage—of breadth
and of space—
And he met but a blundering old cat in
the way—
One that ne'er had alarmed in the broad
light of day!

THE HEN THAT FLEW O'ER THE PEA-STACK.

"CLICKERTY—clickerty—*Clee-clack!*"
Screamed the hen that flew o'er the
pea-stack,
As the pig lay down on its nest of straw—
And the brindle cow
Next made a "row"—
While the donkey rudely laughed—"hee-
haw!"

Then the bull gave out *so* fierce a
bellow
To "show off" as a dangerous fellow!
And the little farm-yard dog at all barked
madly—

And the proud horse neighed,
As the donkey brayed—
Until all listening said their heads ached
badly!

Now, a stately horse was standing near—
And his neighbours liked him not, 'twas
clear;
He was swift of pace and often went
Up a mighty mountain's steep ascent,
From whence he could see the sun go
down
Far over the sea—with a golden crown!

And "the others" could not "go" his
pace,
But lived their lives in the same dull place,
And they nothing knew of the world
beyond
The palings around a farm-yard pond!
And they heard no music—no! not they!
Save that that they made themselves all
day!

And if you'd heard this music—heard it all,
You'd had a headache, too, I really think!
But all is stopped, we hear, before night-
fall,
By measures-ful of wholesome food and
drink—
The freshest grass they give the stately
horse,
To th' little dog they throw a bone—of
course!
And the hen has wheat and barley ears to
pick,
And the pig has, well! just what would
make *you* sick!

"Clickerty—clickerty—*clee-clack!*"
Screamed the hen that flew o'er the
pea-stack;
As the pig lay down on its nest of straw,
And the brindle cow
Next made a "row"—
While the donkey rudely laughed—"hee-
haw!"

THE PUNISHMENT OF VANITY!

ONCE at a fair I bought a horse who was
so very vain,
He *would* no longer wear an ugly shoe
—he loudly cried!

And when the man insisted, and still
nailed it on again,
There was no peace—no quiet, till he
knocked it on one side.

“For such a very pretty hoof undoubtedly
is mine—

So very small, so beautifully shaped,
withal so neat,
To hide it with a shapeless rim forsooth
is very fine!

I choose that the *whole world* shall see
how handsome are *my feet*!”

One day in broiling summertime, he had
to drag a load,
And what a heavy load it was, of
smoking, mouldy straw!

And the way led up a hill and by a hard
and stony road,

And still they urged him on, until his
very feet were raw.

Oh! how he blamed his folly and implored
the blacksmith's men,

To bring again the very shoes that he
had worn before!

For pain had conquered vanity!—if they
would try him *then*,

He'd have them all nailed on, and nailed
most *tightly* on, once more!

And never in the days to come that lesson
he forgot,

He hardly would complain if even his
feet were in a vice!

He put up with the trouble incidental to
his lot,

And knew a smart appearance is not
always worth the price!

THE HASTY LITTLE ARCHITECT.

A LESSON OF LIFE.

O! MORE than “*once upon a time*” one
saw a little bird

In such a foolish hurry ('tis a tale too often
heard!)

To bring to a completion the swift building
of her nest,

And gain thereby the plaudits of her
country ere the rest,

That — fluttering about both in the sun-
shine and the rain,
No hint, no word of counsel would she
pause to entertain!

No!—she cared but to win the admiration
of strange eyes—

And so forgot to wait upon the warnings of
the skies!

So morn and eve she worked away, ac-
complishing the matter

In half the time “those others did”—she
made them all declare,

And each of them was ignorant that no-
thing but a smatter

Of honest work, or skill had been
employed on the affair!

And when a storm of wind broke out—
alas! the walls broke *in*—

The little eggs that there were stored began
to roll about;

The sticks were badly chosen and the
plastered walls were thin,

And, lastly, ere the storm was over *all*
those eggs rolled out!

Thus never did she hatch them, but in
silence—lonely—sad—

Beside her nest they saw her sit—a prey
to melancholy;

Bemoaning through the long days the
misfortunes that she had,

And blaming but the outside world for
what was her own folly!

THE “LITTLE BIRD” I KNEW!

THEN a little bird I knew,

Who was one of not a few;

He sang but when the sun shone on his
cage!

For when the sun went in

He would make himself quite *thin*

By flying round his prison in a rage!

O! he never understood

That he did himself no good

By pecking at the wire-work that confined
him!

Yet he sometimes grew so tired

That he almost had expired—

And more than once—but no one seemed
to mind him!

They only, so I fear,
Thought him foolish—and 'tis clear
Not *always* people help a foolish one!
They said he should be quiet,
And not make so great a riot
Every time a little cloud came o'er the
sun!

For what can *not* be cured
Must be certainly endured,
Like the angry storms that sweep our
summer skies!
But—many grown-up men
Don't learn *this* — and wherefore,
then,
Expect a little bird to be so wise!

ABOUT BIRD-MUSIC GENERALLY.

THERE's a little bird that pipes out —
"Pretty little Dick!"
(A little bird that's really *not*, as some
declare, the linnet!—)
And another softly whistles—"I know I
am not quick,
But I'm coming in a minute—O! I'm coming
in a minute!"

"O! it is very nice here, beside the cherry
tree"—
Sings Mrs. Blackbird—"and the fruit has
ripened just for me!"
"O Cocky — Cocky — *darling* Cocky —
when will you come back"—
Says Mrs. Hen, so all may hear her, from
the barley stack!

But the noisy farm-yard hen may go
cackling on her way,
While to hear the songs of little birds
about the fields I stray;
And I hear again a little voice, a voice
so very sweet,
That sends out from the May-bushes a full
and sounding "*tweet!*"

'Twas just the quiet greenfinch—he often
says no more,
Though some declare of pretty notes he
has no little store—
But I have really *followed him about* to
hear him sing,
And never heard a song that you could
call—"much of a thing!"

But did you hear that shriek—oh! *what*
a startling shriek!
For the noisy, if the handsome, jay can
never softly speak—
Just as the thrush sung loudly from a leafy
chestnut tree—
"O! what a pretty, sunny world around
me do I see!"

"O! Chink-O! Chink-O! *Chink-O!*"
Master Titmouse sings,
As on a bough of larch the dainty little
creature swings,
And hark! there is the cuckoo's voice, so
strange and sad and clear—
That comes (I fancy from the sound) from
some green meadow near.

But little more of that lone bird shall any
hear to-day—
For it says "Cuckoo! Cuckoo!" but
doesn't care to stay!
Its eggs it leaves in the nest of the hedge-
sparrow—and then goes
To some far, distant place, but *where*—
ah! *that*, dears, no one knows!

There are a hundred songsters I cannot
mention here—
Besides the lark that warbles when the
corn is in the ear;
The melancholy nightingale that singeth
in the night—
The owl whose voice is loudest when the
moon is shining bright!

Oh! wouldn't it be a dreary thing into the
woods to stray
Only to find our little birdies, one and
all, were dumb!
I think I'd stay at home—then—for "ever
and a day"—
But I believe—I do, indeed—*that day*
will never come!

THE FLY AND THE PEACH.

I SAW a poor fly drowning one fine day,
I helped to save and dry him in the
sun,
Until he, comforted, went on his way,
And yet of thanks for all my help gave
none!

I sat down weary in the shade and said—
 "Now let me rest—for I am tired with
 work"—

And on the mossy bank laid low my head,
 Nor thought what plagues in spots of
 peace may lurk!

Then came an evil buzzing in the air,
 And then a vicious dash into my eyes—
 Now *here* its shrill voice sounded and now
there—

Until I thought I heard a thousand flies!

"Ungrateful insect! have you never
 learned
 That one good turn at *least* deserves
 another?"

In truth I thought *some* gratitude was
 earned,
Some claim to be respected as a
 brother!"

"Nonsense!" he answered—"I'm not to
 be caught

By humbug—well I know you had not
 troubled
 To drag me from the mire—had you not
 thought

Your own importance in the world it
 doubled!"

Nor, as he flew away, could I deny

A "thing, or two," was known to our
 smart fly—

He, with his restless vision even might
 see

More than was guessed at, or by you, or
 me!

For some will flaunt out their most showy
 work

Before our view, as banners are un-
 furled—

While in the sadder shades of life they
 shirk

All duties not applauded by the world!

FOOLISH LITTLE DICK.

"O! LITTLE Dick—come out with me—
 Come out with me—
 Come out with me—

We'll sail our boats right out to sea—
 Right out to sea—
 Quite out to sea!

"And there's a sailor's idle boat—
 And no one cares where *he* may be—
 We'll set it on the waves afloat—
 For brave and wise are surely we!

"'Twill be the finest of all fun
 To sail towards the setting sun—
 And go where all the waves look bright—
 And far-off vessels glow with light!

"So—little Dick—come out with me—
 Come out with me—
 Come out with me—
 We'll sail our boats right out to sea—
 Right out to sea—
 Quite out to sea!"

And little Dick the call obeyed—
 Had Dick a little longer stayed
 He would have seen, with parting day,
 Would neither peace, nor sunshine stay!

He looked but idly to the sky,
 Where slowly crept the shades of night—
 As quickly he obeyed the cry,
 And passed for ever from our sight!

ANOTHER FOOLISH LITTLE DICK.

YES! this was *one* poor, foolish Dick—*
 But ah! there was another once!
 One who was always much too "spick
 And span," and nothing of a dunce!
 And yet—"Poor Dick!
 He was so quick
 He tumbled over the candlestick!"

But this might not have greatly mattered
 Only the candlestick was china!
 And downstairs all the pieces clattered,
 And roused an angry cook—Old Dinah!

I think—I *do*!—she was asleep,
 And wanted in that state to keep!
 So, being wakened, furious grew!
 At all events, she, too, was quick,
 And seizing on unlucky Dick,
 How hard her hand was he soon knew!

* Dick of the last song!

I don't think—though I can't *for certain*
tell—
That ever once again this poor Dick fell
O'er an unlucky kitchen candlestick—
Yes! he was henceforth cured of being—
QUICK!

A TALE FOR DEAR LITTLE BOYS!

ONCE there were two little fellows,
Who *would* use *one* pair of bellows,
Although it was quite plain they didn't
know
The *way* to make it really *rightly* blow!

But they had somewhere read—
Or so they gravely said—
That two heads always better are than one!
So when they both applied
Themselves to blow, and tried
Their best, they thought a clever thing
they'd done.

Of another thing, it seemed,
These two had never dreamed—
That is—too many cooks the broth will
spoil!
And they also ne'er were taught
What a useful thing is THOUGHT!
So, hour by hour, they kept on at their
toil!

Now many have been told
That, often, even the old
Will spend their lives in the same useless
way!
Yes! strain their larger powers—
And waste their older hours—
Nor find it out until their dying day!

But don't *you* try to do it,
My dears—or you will rue it—
Although you think you *are* fine little
fellows!

*Let one of you aspire
To neatly lay the fire,
And let the other blow it with his bellows!*

TO OUR DEAR YOUNG LONDONERS!

(ZOË AND HARRY.)

O! THE bush* in your garden is growing
quite tall,
And the foxgloves that flowered long since,
have seeded!
And the ivy you planted clings tight to
the wall—
While the paths have been carefully
widened—and weeded!

And the pigeons are washing and getting
so clean
That their necks and their wings are all
fit to be seen,
Fresh sticks to their nests all the day long
they carry
To make them look nice for dear Zoë and
Harry!

For they want all their houses to be in
good trim,
So not to be scolded by her, or by
him!
And they coo and they coo, in the prettiest
way—
For "Zoë and Harry are coming"—they
say!

O! the cherries are everywhere getting *so*
red—
And the strawberries don't go to sleep in
their bed,
Though the gooseberries still make you
screw up your face!
But soon they will "round"—and grow
ripe at a pace!

And the apples to *swell* are most eagerly
trying—
Do make haste to come, or they'll all fall
a-crying!—
Meanwhile our great ocean lies still and so
low—
All waiting for Zoë and Harry — I
know!

* A lilac bush.

So put on your hats—like my dearest of
 pets—
 And come down at once—just before the
 sun sets!
 You for dinner shall have a nice fowl—and
 some fruit—
 And any thing else that your tastes may
 just suit!
 And plenty of kisses we'll put on each
 cheek—
 Before you have time, dear old darlings,
 to speak!

A LETTER TO ZOË.

ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED IN THE DOLL'S HOUSE LAST NIGHT!

MY own dear grand-daughter—I had not
 meant

A letter to you just *this day* to write,
 But I must tell you of a *great* event
 That happened in your own doll's house
 last night!*

You know the two fine-lady dolls, that
 dwell

In the "best rooms"—especially the one
 With brown eyes—who can read, and write,
 and spell,
 And talk — and knows how *all* things
 should be done!

So said big brown eyes to big eyes of
 blue,

"My dearest Polly, if you *could* but guess
 What's just this moment come before my
view,

I *really* think you'd jump out of your
dress!"

"Do tell!" said gentle blue eyes, with a
 kiss—

A kiss that was *all* coaxing, and *most*
 hearty—

"Well! listen—then!" said brown eyes—
 "it is this!

Polly, my dear — SUPPOSE WE GIVE A
 PARTY!"

"O! O! how *very* nice—you *darling*
 dear!

'Tis just what I should like above *all*
 things;

Only—there's *one* great difficulty here—
 We are not birds—you know—we have no
 wings!

"Where *shall* we get nice dishes for our
 feast!

So *many* things are wanted — don't you
 know—

We must have jellies and jam tarts, *at*
least—

And creams, *well whipped*—to make them
 look like snow!"

"I'll tell you, if you will the secret keep"
 Said Susan—"When the cook is fast asleep
 I'll go and rout her cupboard through—
 for fear,
 And plum, and apple-jelly all are there!"

Now cook thought that a mouse, and no-
 thing more,

That night had dared to break into her
 store—

And there were many nice things in *her*
 cupboard,

For she was not like our poor old Dame
 Hubbard!

Cook's cupboard, you must know, was
never bare!

Apples and nuts and custards—all were
 there!

And so when cook was safe and sound in
 bed

These little thieves soon made a glorious
 spread!

They made their dresses look so smart
and neat—

And then they put new shoes upon their
 feet—

But oh! their stock was small, nor could
 they find

Down stairs the *clothes*, at least, that
 pleased each mind!

Cook's clothes had grease upon them—*very*
much

Of grease! — the smallest corner they
 couldn't touch!

And so they looked amongst their own
 small stores

And found *at least* some *snowy* pinafores!

* One that was kept for her in what she called her "sea-side home."

O! *such* a happy time they had, when all
Were fast asleep, except the little mice—
And "*too* delicious" they that feast did
call,
Especially the apples—tarts and spice!

And I have nothing—*nothing* bad to tell,
For all your dollies did they did *so* well,
That no untidy litter meets the sight,
To show the merry dance they had last
night!

A SECOND LETTER TO ZOË. ABOUT GRANDMAMA'S DOLL'S HOUSE!

I HAD a doll's house once, as you must
know!

But then it was a thing but kept for *show*,
Except upon my birthday—once a year!
Or when some little friend might come to
play.

That was a very rare event, my dear,
With me—and always treasured, I *must*
say!

There was a chest of drawers, for one
thing,

Full of small "party-clothes," all smart
and bright!

There was a nursery—in it was a swing,
A small *crib* and a bed to use at night,
That had its bolster—pillow, and *all that*,
And with four posts and curtains tied, *so*
pat!

There was a staircase—carpeted and smart
With rods—rods that were made of silver
wires!

A staircase leading from the upper part
To kitchens—where were fireplaces—(*no*
fires)!

O! 'twas a *sweet* house and *kept* sweet—
because,

With it (except at festive times) to play
Was quite against all customs and all
laws!

I dare say 'tis the same up to this day!
For *tidy* dolls lived there and neither
waste,

Nor carelessness, *one* of their rooms dis-
graced!

HARRY'S EVENING WALK.

OH! Harry-boy*—this bright, warm day
Come out beneath the sky and play!
Let's hunt the fleeting thistle-down,
Or softly watch the shrew-mouse brown!

Ah! there the brilliant gad-flies come!
And hark! the wild-bee's busy hum;
Here! midst the clover at our feet,
Or in the honeysuckle sweet.

Here is the little song-lark's nest—
Here is the home he loves the best,
Not in the oak-tree, or the thorn,
But down amongst the golden corn.

Take care!—lest little feet should pass
O'er the small strawberries in the grass;
And now we reach the hedge again,
And find the blackberries' red stain.

Sit, now, upon this pollard stump,
And watch the little squirrel jump—
See how that bunch of acorn swings,
As lightly, merrily, he springs!

What next can these small fingers carry
To bring back to our play-room, Harry?
You say you want some flowers for Zoë,†
Some poppy heads, so bright, so showy.

But choicer far the small wild rose,
That in the lane's soft shadow grows;
The honeysuckle, making sweet
The trees whose boughs above us meet!

But soon the sun will go to bed—
'Tis looking rather tired and red!
We'll go home, dear, while there is light,
So bid the birds and flowers — Good-
Night!

PHILIP'S SONG.

SHINE OUT—BRIGHT SUN!

BRIGHT SUN! glad sun! shine out once
more!

For the winds are silent—the storm is o'er!
Shine out on the rush of the sullen streams,
Light up the earth with thy cheery beams!

* "He" was usually called Harry-boy at this early period of his existence!

† His little and only sister.

The earth is cold and the daisies *shiver*—
 And the lilies break in the rushing river—
 And the oak and the elm-tree boughs are
 bare—
 For the leaves danced out in the gusty
 air!

And the tiny wren with the golden crest
 Flies home to her warm and moss-built
 nest;
 And even the hardy robin hides
 Its head in the farm-yard's straw-built
 sides!

Shine out, oh sun! with thy pleasant ray,
 Let the clouds and the damp fogs skulk
 away;
 Let the swallows out, from beneath the
 eaves,
 Let the rosebud open its fragrant leaves!

Bright sun! glad sun! shine out once
 more,
 For the winds are silent, the storm is o'er!
 Shine out on the rush of the sullen streams,
 Light up the earth with thy cheery beams!

SYDNEY AND THE SEASONS!

"SPRING makes the little wild flowers
 grow,
 Spring makes the streamlets brightly flow;
 Spring teaches little birds to sing,
 So, well may Sydney love the spring!

"And summer brings the sunny skies,
And summer, picnics brings as well!
 And O! the pretty butterflies!
 And O! how sweet the roses smell!

"And autumn brings us *such* nice fruit—
Such pears, and grapes of purple glow;
 And well *my* appetite they suit!
 I wish they'd longer last, you know!

"Then winter brings the warm firesides,
 The frozen ponds and merry slides!"
 Thus truly wise are Sydney's reasons
 For liking each one of the seasons!

A MESSAGE TO THE ABSENT!

(IN NEW ZEALAND).

OH! children* — ye who dwell so far
 away,
 Beyond the rocks and sands of our own
 shore—
 And where our day is night, our night thy
 day,
 And where thy hours in unknown tasks
 pass o'er!
 O! unknown dear ones—all good wishes
 we,
 Thy grandparents, send out across the
 sea!

Fair may the flowers in thy garden grow—
 Sweetly may all their tender blossoms
 blow;
 May thy fruits ripen as the months pass
 by,
 Unchilled by sudden tempests from the
 sky!

Pray Heaven that there you and your
 parents find
 More calmness than our troubled regions
 know—
 Less bitter blasts of an inclement wind,
 More days of warmth, and less chill falls
 of snow;
 And if ye tempests have we know not
 here,
 Still, let us trust thy skies will ever clear,
 And that, as noon approaches, each shall
 pass,
 Nor leave one gloomy shadow on the grass;
 While sound the gentler voices of this
 earth,
 Full of calm peace, if ringing not with
 mirth.

Aye! children—ye who dwell so far away,
 Beyond the rocks and sands of our own
 shore—
 And where our day is night, our night
 thy day,
 And where thy hours in unknown tasks
 pass o'er;
 Again—beloved ones—all good wishes we,
 Thy grandparents, send out across the
 sea!

* Known by the charming names of Ronald, Muriel and Esmond.

GRANDPAPA'S SONG!

"I LOVE seeing little eyes
Bright and clear as summer skies—
I love seeing little feet
Trot about the warm greenwood,
Picking flowers, all bright and sweet,
Breathing air both fresh and good;
I love even more, I think
To hear a happy, childish song,
To note the cheeks are brown and pink,
The little legs all firm and strong!"

"I love wild flowers—I have been
Through right many a lonely scene—
Scrambling, in my younger days,
Through the bogs of unused ways,
Finding herbs and gathering seeds
From what *you* might think but weeds,
Yet that made good medicines—sure
Some odd pain of yours to cure!"

"Yes! in many a little seed
Has an useful drug been found,
Which may help *you* in some need,
Making sorest places sound!
Think not flowers and plants are meant,
Only just to please our eyes—
All for some good have been sent,
As, in time, have learnt the wise!"

GRANDMAMA'S SONG!

"I LOVE lilies—I love roses—
I love all sorts of fair posies—
Ragged robin, bright bluebell,
Honeysuckle for its smell,
Tender primroses—that hide
By the stream, or in the lane—
Yellow cowslips, spreading wide
O'er the field and grassy plain.

"I love orchids—cookoo flowers—
Bitter-sweet, that hangs its berries
O'er our leafy summer bowers;
I love blossoms of wild cherries,
Blossoms, too, of May—so fair—
Scenting far and wide the air!"

"Lilies of the valley—these
I know every one must please!
Pretty little fairy darlings!
Then the "blue-bottles" in wheat,

Bright of hue as eggs of starlings,
Oh, *so* bright, if never sweet!"

"Love—for perfume—mignonette—
Pale as it may be of hue—
Nor the lilacs, dears, forget,
Nor the jasmine—O! 'tis true
Far more flowers than *I* can tell
Are fair of colour, sweet of smell!"

THE STRONG WEST WIND.

TWO YOUTHFUL OPINIONS!

ERNEST.

O BEAUTIFUL wind, with the fresh, strong
breath,
Sweeping away the works of death,
The shrivelled leaves and the withered
flowers,
The heavy fogs and the misty showers.

How fresh thou art in the fragrant wood!
How pleasant thou art on the open
plain!
And thy power is the power of the true
and good—
Thy reign but a pure and useful reign.

MARY.

O wind—cruel wind! go back to sleep,
In thy thousand caves by the restless deep!
Ah! drive not the weary vessels back—
Let the ships sail on, on their homeward
track!

How the forests moan as thy voice sweeps
by—
And the pine boughs rend with a mighty
sigh—
And the hares crouch down in their
"forms" of grass,
As the gusts of the angry tempests pass.

O! winds—wild winds! go back to your
caves!
Let the sun go down on your tossing
waves—
Let the wild bird sleep on its tattered nest,
For the world is tired—let the tired world
rest!

THE LOITERING SWALLOW.

"'Tis time to leave this pleasant land
and fly across the sea,
The skies are smiling now, but soon will
cold and stormy be;
Bid all your friends good-bye, my dear,
and say that we *must* go
Before the flowers are dead—before the
winds of winter blow.

"See now the woods and forests every day
become more bare,
And in the early morning fogs and mists
make thick the air;
The bees are dead—few flies are left for
you and me to eat,
Nor in the fields we now can hear those
songs *men* call so sweet!

"For, as we find, few people have *good*
ears, nor seem to know
No song *can* like *our* twitter be—so gentle,
sweet and low!
But I'm forgetting!—time is passing!—
bid your friends good-bye,
Already, as it seems to me, cold winds
sweep through the sky!"

The swallow's friend would listen not—*she*
said the heavens were fair,
To leave her home for only idle fears *she*
did not care!
She'd wait till winds were chill—*she* cried;
a rapid flyer *she*!
'Twould be "an easy thing" to pick her
friend up, out at sea!

The other wasted no more words, but went
upon his way,
Nor went too soon, though just in time,
to reach his native shore;
The winds grew cold, the woods all bare
—the skies all dull and grey,
And the poor Loiterer, so 'tis said, to
home returned no more!

WHERE DO THE RAVENS GO?*

"Two Lapps reached height of 1947 mètres above the sea, whence they gained a view of an endless snow field. . . . During their march they had seen two ravens flying north. . . ." *Times*, March 31st, 1888.
"The 'glacial theory' will to a large extent rest on mere guess work until some enterprising explorer is able to break through this 'Chinese wall' surrounding these vast continents of the Arctic regions and lay bare the mysteries of this unknown land."—*Ibid.*

O RAVEN! raven! whither dost thou fly—
To what unknown realm of the Arctic
sky?

O raven! raven! wherefore would'st thou
go
Across these mighty plains of "endless
snow"?

O raven!—dost thou dream to find a home
In realms where never sound of life is
heard—

Under so endless and so drear a dome?
Would thou could'st speak to us, ad-
venturous bird!

No eggs are there, so travellers have said,
To serve thee for thy food—no little
mice!

Only an ever foggy sky o'erhead—
Beneath it frozen snow and blue-black
ice!

O raven!—dare we hope that there may
be

A warmer spot—although *we* know it
not,
Beyond the ghastly, icy Arctic sea,
Not a mere lifeless, silent, sunless spot?

O raven!—once more, would'st thou had'st
a tongue

And one that men could clearly under-
stand—

But never to our deaf ears can be sung,
What thou may'st see in that mysterious
land

Towards which we see thee flying—never!
never!

A land that seems as closed to man for
ever!

* If the subject of these verses should appear to be somewhat beyond the comprehension of the little readers for whom the majority of the poems are suitable, a very little amount of explanation will bring it within their powers of understanding. I have, indeed found few subjects which appeared to interest more profoundly the *inquiring* class of children's minds than stories about the Arctic regions, about the Esquimaux, their dogs and sleighs, the seals, birds, white bears and the like, which inhabit that dreary part of the world.

THE LOST PATH.

THE TRAVELLER.

"OH! stranger—I have lost my way!
I fear that I am far astray,
The path is strange—the hour is late—
I cannot find my father's gate!"

THE STRANGER.

"Ah!—simple one, go back! go back!
Thy steps have lost the rightful track;
The way is long—the way is steep—
And wolves surround the simple sheep."

THE TRAVELLER.

"And yet across the spreading down
The lights as of a busy town
Shine brightly out upon the dark—
And now I hear the watchdog's bark!"

THE STRANGER.

"That watchdog's distant bark is one of
fear,
And meant to warn thee there is danger
near,
That foemen even now are on thy track—
Oh! simple one, retrace thy steps—*Turn
back!*"

THE LIGHT OF THE STARS.

OH! stars of the night—
So clear and bright!
Shining across the sparkling snow—
Lighting the boat—
Or the ship afloat—
And the stretching plain and the valley
low!

O stars! shine still,
O'er the wood and hill—
O'er the paths by the lonely shepherd
taken;
Till the mists so grey,
Roll far away,
And the sun shall yet again awaken.

Look down on the bed
Where the curly head
Of my fair grandchild so softly lies—
Where it dreams of the joys
Of apples and toys,
Till it opens again its glad blue eyes!

AFTER A STORM AT SEA.

O! 'Twas the grandest sight—that storm
at sea,
If you thought not of harm it might have
done!
How glorious the lightning seemed to me,
Crossing the clouds that veiled the noon-
tide sun!

Only — one thought about the fishing-
boat
That we not long ago had seen afloat,
And hoped that it was safe and near the
shore,
Each time we heard the thunder louder
roar!

* * * * *

"And, now my children, that the storm is
past
Let's go down to the shore, to see what
spoil
The angry sea upon its banks has cast!
Here is a chain — or of ship's rope, a
coil!

"Here are small shells of many varied
hues,
The names of which I cannot always
tell—
And see! what pretty shades of pinks and
blues,
And oh! what curious shapes they have
as well!

"And here are seaweeds of a newer kind
Than oft are found here—little ones
and great!
But now the sun has gone down and its
blind
Is drawn!—let's run home or we shall
be late!"

OUT IN THE TWILIGHT—WITH
LITTLE “WIDE-AWAKES!”

THERE'S something lovely in the world
outside,

At all times, even in hours so still and
late,
Believe me, dear ones—for the earth is
wide
Enough to hold both little things and
great!

Look at this glow-worm, shining on the
grass—

How curious, how wonderful its light!
O! let us stop one moment as we pass,
For we can only see it out at night!

Yonder the rabbits in the meadows feed—
See how they—where the moon shines
bright and clear—

Practise their gambols — dashing at full
speed

Into their holes if footsteps wander
near!

Listen and you the nightingale may hear,
From the dark woods—and if you wander
near

Those far-off barns the owl will sometimes
screech

At you — for *his* is scarce a “*silvern*”
speech!

I love these summer nights—how fair they
are!

Look up, my dear ones—yonder brilliant
star

Is in “Orion's belt”—how bright it shines
Through the dark branches of the silent
pines.

Now *don't* you see our Queen Mab?—
really now!

Look in that flower—she may be hiding
there—

Or in that wild rose hanging from its
bough,

Is *that* her little head, with golden hair?
No! then we must turn back, I fear, and
come

Another night to find the fairy's home!

THE LIGHT OF JACK O'
LANTERN.

To —

I USED to go out with a brother—“fond
Of stars”—to look out for the Polar star,
But took care not to slip into a pond!

For many in the old home-field there
are—

At any rate there *were* long years ago—
For if there *still* are ponds how *should* I
know!

Ponds are like tearful cheeks, and some-
times *dry*,

Though scarce upon a *clean* face shines
the sky!

I often thought then, of the sailors, dear,
Whose ships were guided by that Polar
light—

So beautifully brilliant—O! so clear,
When it was hidden by no mists of
night!

Not twinkling—but so steadily, you know,
It shone on fields of grass, or plains of
snow!

Sometimes — down in that large field's
lower corner,

We would watch “Jack o' Lantern”—
'twas a damp,

Dark place, and nothing well could be
forlornier,

And wanted, as you felt, a shining lamp;

Only one could not *trust* it—it would flit
Now here, now there, as though some
trembling hand,

Trembling, we thought, with cold, was
carrying it,

Across the pathless and the boggy land.

Now it was gone, and *now* looked bright
again,

And now seemed dancing wildly o'er the
plain,

And *then* when most you wanted it—
behold!

'Twas gone from you and left you in the
cold—

Shining far in the distance—faint and
pale—

O! to us children 'twas a puzzling tale!

A "MADCAP" GRANDMAMA!

(See page 4.)

A MADCAP girl was I, once on a time!
And well your grandmama knew how to
climb!

For she loved swinging on the hanging
boughs

Of a huge sycamore in a *snug* field,
Where grazed the sheep and asses and
meek cows,
While, overhead the rooks at sunset
wheeled!

Yes! for there was a rookery "hard by,"
As folks in Hertfordshire are fond of
saying—

There stood huge elm trees up against the
sky,

Whose dark and outstretched arms were
often swaying

In the high winds that in spring's wilder
hours,

Here swept the woods—the fields—the
garden bowers!

And when came winter, with its ice and
snow,

I slid upon the ponds, as you must know!
And I could walk upon high stilts as well—
Of many a feat of *that* sort I could
tell!

Moreover quite a hand at trap and ball

Was I—besides I'd often play a game

Of cricket!—and if some *did* rudely call

Me "tom-boy" I don't know that I
felt shame!

No! I didn't care—my brothers all and I
Were just the best of friends—should any
dare

To call me names when one of these stood
by,

To do it *twice* I think they would not
care!

For my good brothers, don't you know,
could fight

Well with their fists, for what *they* thought
the right!

A healthy life seemed this—nor let me
pass

O'er joys of sowing seeds and *clipping*
grass,

And making gravel paths in that small
plot

Of garden that I called mine own—'twas
not

O'erlarge, but 'twas "mine own" and
here I grew

White crocuses—hepaticas of blue,
And roses, and then currant bushes!—
these

Failed of their fruit, as did my rows of
peas

Of bearing pods! — and then I made,
beside

A tree, a rustic seat, one day—not wide
Or large, but I could sit on it and eat
My lunch while resting weary hands or
feet!

I wish you'd seen it, dears—even the
small,

Neat path I spoke of and the ivied wall,
The little pond, well *pebbled* and kept
nice—

Covered in winter by its *coat* of ice!

But useful in the summer-time, to give

Water to all my plants, and make them
live,

And *sweetly* send out healthy buds to
blow

Through *those* hot summer days of—long
ago!

WILD FLOWERS AND BIRDS'

NESTS.

Oh! one of the things, dears, that I liked
the best

Was—collecting and then drying our wild
flowers;

Though they met with some contempt
from all "the rest,"

Who thought such work but a waste of
summer hours!

And indeed, each lost its fragrance and its
hue,

And became in time *so* faded, dry and
dead—

And we know what *then* they are!—the
green and blue

Grow yellow! while to a *dull* brown turn
the red!

But I named them first, from books on botany,
 And a careful little painting made of each—
 So I could know them all, however dry—
 And the class and the order also, then could teach!

But this was nothing in *beauty*, you must know,
 To the birds' nests and birds' eggs that were collected
 By one of my brothers it was quite a show—
 Far beyond what those who came to see expected!

But when the brother who made it went to sea,
 He sent this pretty collection far away
 To the British Museum, where it still may be—
 If, indeed, it is in existence in this day!

MY BROODS OF CHICKENS!

ANOTHER thing I *greatly* liked, my dears,
 'Twas rearing a large brood of pretty chickens;
 Though I felt often the most anxious fears
 Lest any of them *might* go—to "the dickens!"

That is, lest they should die—be killed,
 or run
 Away and lose themselves in the long grass
 Of meadows, round-about;—to many a one
 To tell the truth, this thing *did* come to pass!

For through that long grass often a stray cat,
 Or dog might pass and hear the piteous cry
 The little thing would make—be sure of *that*,
 When it to run back home in vain would try!

If heard I used to search about and find
 My little chick, and bring it safely home,
 And told it to be *sure*, next time, to mind
 Its mother, or to mischief it *must* come!!

For there were kites above and rats below—
 And these were always on the watch, you know,
 To pick up any foolish little thing
 That strayed just *too* far from its mother's wing!

OUR FAVOURITE FOSSIL PITS!

BUT—it may be you won't quite understand
 That, of *all* our employments, I liked most
 To hunt the fossil pits of our own land
 For the queer shell-fish of an ancient coast!

Here were strange marks that no one understood—
 Here the impression of huge teeth and bones—
 Here those of leaf, of twig, of unknown wood—
 Some found in clay, some in hard, chalky stones.

And side by side, with many a fossil mark
 Of leaves of trees, trees that were known no more,
 One found the side jaw of some monstrous shark—
 Even sometimes of strange *ribs* a mighty store!

Here were prints of a saurian's back-bone—
 —O!
 To think what creatures lived here—long ago,
 When no man to rule over them was seen—
 How strange a time, my dears, that must have been!

One sometimes tried these bones to *polish*
 —such
 As were not quite encrusted with "iron rust"—
 But often they would crumble at a touch,
 Or a mere breath would turn them into dust!

ABOUT A MAGPIE.

WE had a magpie, once upon a time—
 And *such* a busy, saucy thief was he!
He never thought that stealing was a
 crime—

And in a hole beneath the cherry tree
 He used to hide the things he stole and
 these
 Were more than I could number, if you
 please!

O! how he frightened once a village lad
 Who came into our garden to steal fruit!
 The boy was said to be both bold and
 bad,

Yet much he feared detection and
 pursuit!
 And as he stole across the orchard ground
 To pluck the plums from an especial
 tree,
 He heard the strangest laugh—a shrill,
 sharp sound
 Of "Ha! ha! ha!" yet nothing could
 he see!

But frightened out of all his wits, they
 say,
 He stood one moment — and then *tore*
 away!

And told his mother later—with a pale
 Scared face—for so indeed *she* told the
 tale—
 Something most dreadful—*what* he didn't
 know—

Scared him as he *just passed the garden*
gate!
 And never more, he said, would he e'er
 go

Near *our* old orchard as the hour grew
 late!

HUNTING FOR HEN'S EGGS.

I *did* like, also, on a soft, bright morn,
 To wander through green fields and
 down the lanes,
 Near the old Manor House, where I was
 born,
 Uncut and gold-like shone the plains!

And in the hedges, thick and high, that
 wound
 Around the pretty meadows, might be found,
 A snug round nest of twelve, or of a
 score
 Of hens' white eggs, if one found nothing
 more!

Sometimes that "more" was met with—
 some new plant
 Or root, for which I often went out
 hunting—

'Twas orchids once—(knowing such flowers
 were scant
 In numbers)—startling oft thereby the
 Bunting!

For in birds and wildflowers our place was
 rich!

And you could scarcely hunt about you,
 long,
 But treasure might be culled from bank, or
 ditch—

Where nettles stung you well and briars
were strong!

Then—there were magpies' nests in the
 tall trees

Swinging in the high winds of long ago!
 And it was always hard to get at these,
 They were so well fenced round by
 thorns, you know!

And when a tame one afterwards we kept
 I learnt how mischievous a "Pie"*
 can be!

For often then my little brother wept,
 Because he picked the cherries from his
 tree!

'Twas from pure mischief, as it seemed—
 they fell

Upon the ground, and there he'd let
 them lie!

But to be always "doing" he loved well,
 Especially when it was something sly!

Or sometimes he had punished been before
 For *doing* like things—*then he did them*
more

For oh! a very naughty child was he,
 Our Magpie—naughtier child could *never*
 be!

* The same magpie spoken of in the preceding poem.

ABOUT OUR "DARK ROOM";

OR,

ABOUT GRANDMAMA'S
BIRTHPLACE.

THE Manor House where I was born,
my dears,
Old Sandon Bury, was a dear, old
house!

Much pleasure had we there, if, some-
times, fears

We felt, of something far worse than a
mouse!

'Twas a large building and unlit by gas,
That was but little used so long ago—
Now *every* place is lit up—and alas!

There's no dark corner any more, you
know!

Yes! — to speak truth — when we were
young, we felt

It was not nice to pass by many a place,
Landing, or corner, where, 'twas said,
there knelt

A mourner often, with a shadowy face!!

That mourner was declared to kneel be-
neath

The picture of an old magician—hung
To face the stairs—upon its brow a wreath
Of leaves—a red cloak o'er its shoulders
flung.

At least, so I remember it—and I
Oft paused to gaze on it against my
will—

It seemed to watch you with one bright,
dark eye,

Almost as though it *might* be living
still!

All nonsense, as we know!—But I was
then

Of age when any little fancy scares!

And I *did*, sometimes, shake a little, when
Told, in the twilight, to go up—*those*
stairs!

Now in the garrets was the large "dark
room!"

The very name the timid filled with
fright;

Much lumber there was stowed, all wrapt
in gloom,
For there no window was, to let in
light!

Only a monstrous chimney-place—down
this

The light oft brightly shone!—many a
bat

And even an owl came there—its curious
hiss

One often heard, but never cared for
that!

But — *sometimes* — one received a sudden
fright,

Or was awakened with a start, my dears;
The birds would knock down *mortar*, in
the night,

And fill our young minds with a hundred
fears!

I would not put a strange child, *that* I
know!

To sleep near our "dark room" of long
ago;

I wonder if 'tis there still! it seems
strange,

But folks in those parts then disliked a
change!

Now — they may even *themselves* have
changed; that well

Might be—since that past time of which
I tell!

THE PUNISHMENT OF BEING
SHUT IN THE "DARK ROOM."

AND yet, 'tis true—we learnt not to care
much

About it after we had there been put
(When naughty!—) a few times, but soon
would touch

Dark things about us with our hand or
foot!

My brothers said they often went to sleep
After the key was turned—nor cared to
tell,

What I knew—that they oftener sat to
weep,

And longed to hear the ring of the tea-
bell!

The birds in the big, roomy chimney-place,
 As I have said, made much of noise;
 then mice
 Over one's feet would run their scrambling
 race—
 And we didn't think *that*—either—was
too nice!

No one meant to be cruel—surely not!
 But in those days it was a duty thought
 To punish—*one* rule nobody forgot—
 For — “spare the rod and spoil the
 child” was taught!

No! it was not unkindly meant—dears—
 only
 To make us feel that we did wrong, that
 day;
 'Twas thought that leaving us to feel so
 lonely
 Would make us sorry—But—Well! I
 can't say!
 Still—one thing none of *us* e'er under-
 stood—
 That *that* “Dark Room” made anybody
 good!

A THIEF IN THE NIGHT!

OR,

A NEW SORT OF HOUSE- BREAKER!

OH! in what a fright, in what a terrible
 fright
 Were two of the “daughters of the
 Manor House,”*
 Once on a time—in a cold and moony
 night—
 And it was at something *much* worse
 than a mouse!

Yes! *indeed*—at what seemed *far* more
 strange than *that*—
 For they heard first the sharp breaking
 of the glass
 Of the window—then what *seemed* a head,
 or hat
 Stuck in the hole, through which it could
 not pass!

Fast seemed it caught and a strange noise
 it made,
 But *what* was the noise the girls didn't
 understand!
 Half awake and cold and terribly afraid,
 They opened their bedroom door with a
 trembling hand.

For of one thing best to do they felt no
 doubt,
 And so they at once to their sleeping
 father ran—
 And he sprang up, seized a poker and
 came out,
 To find out the truth of the story of “the
 man!”

And what do you think?—'twas one of
 the farmyard cocks,
 Quite scared out of all its wits—by a
 wicked fox,
 That was prowling around the roost on
 which it sat—
 It was nothing more alarming, dears, than
that!

So the frightened cock was put, till dawn
 of day,
 In a basket, and the girls went back to
 bed,
 And the wicked fox was cheated of his
 prey—
 And a good thing, too — as *everybody*
 said!

THE OWL IN THE LAUREL BUSH.

THERE was an Owl—a white and solemn
 bird,
 That used to sleep in an odd place at
 night,
 In a big laurel!—and one often heard
 “Tu whit — tu whoo,” whene'er the
 moon shone bright,
 Sound through the garden, and the
 churchyard near—
 A note the villagers heard but with fear!

'Twas silly was it not!—Yes, they *were*
 silly,
 These untaught people living round our
 home—

* A true incident that happened at Sandon Bury, one night.

Poor timid Susan, and poor stupid Billy—
None of them near us liked at dusk to
come—

For they were really frightened—dears—
and each

Would run away, heard they the white
owl's screech!

The beautiful soft thing!—I often saw
It fly across our lawn at twilight hours—
Sometimes, I fear, a mouse was in its
claw

Or small bird, stolen from among our
flowers!

And this I did *not* like, but you'll admit
The creature is not worse than your
pet cat—

She won't give up her birds and mice *one*
bit,

Try her with milk, or with an angry
pat!

It is their "nature" little things to eat—
As *we* of tender lambkins make *our*
meat!!

THE VISIT TO THE ORCHARD.

ONE of the autumn treats to us* most
dear

You all, of youthful years, may under-
stand—

The visit to "*the Orchard!*"—one not
near,

But only reached by drives o'er *roughest*
land!

For I can tell you in those bye-gone days
The roads were of the very worst, *out*
there!—†

Unfit for e'en the light, old Cee-spring
chaise—

Not to be "*spilt*" needing your greatest
care!

Each on the "spree" with a large basket
went—

A good and strong one and made clean
and trim!

For carrying our autumn gatherings meant,
And one we hoped to cram up to the
brim!

Yes! it must something hold of all sorts—
grapes,

Plums, damsons, filberts, walnuts, cobb-
nuts, pears—‡

To gather which we oft got into scrapes,
Returning home with garments full of
tears!

All the last treasures of *our* autumn we
Were bent upon procuring, don't you
know—

One climbed up while a second *shook* the
tree,

A third in baskets caught the spoil
below!

The filberts gathered we by the mere
matter

Of "hook-sticks"—as for walnuts, the
farm boys

Threw *up* their sticks and down would
come a patter

Of green nobbs—filling us with childish
joys!

Then came the drive home afterwards, at
leisure—

With all the woods red with the sunset's
glow,

And each may seem now but a trifling
pleasure,

But was by no means *sneezed at*—long
ago!

LITTLE LAUNCELOT.||

THERE lived a little boy once near our
home,

Who climbing o'er our garden wall would
come!

A very pretty lad, with dark-blue eyes,
And *yet* we hardly felt him kind, or wise!!

* "Us," meaning grandmama, herself and her younger brothers—the sisters, being much older, were considered to be "above such sports," excepting one, who was a baby and therefore was beneath them! The orchard, we should remark, belonged to a kind, old rustic lady, delighted to give us children this yearly treat.

† "Out there" meant in the more rural parts of Herts. a part of the world noted for its orchards.

‡ Such of these treasures as would "keep" were carefully put by, to reappear at one of the "little birthday feasts" referred to at p. 797.

|| Little Launcelot, son of the Rev. R. S——.

He liked to steal into our garden—Why?
Because he'd pick our fruit upon the sly!
I'm sorry this to say, but it was *true*,
And when found out into a rage he flew!

Gravel was then picked up—sometimes a
stone—

With all his little might this last was
thrown—

(O! once how it *did* bruise me!—) then
with thick,
If childish boots, he at my shins would
kick!

He'd come behind me next and pull my
curls—

And if the tears into my eyes *would*
rush,

He'd call me just the *babyist* of girls,
And laugh at me until he made me
blush!

Yet he professed to love me and would
rather

Be with me, he declared, than with his
father,

Or mother—if *one* spoilt him, as some said,
The *other* often sent him—flogged—to bed!

Yes! if did Launcelot aught he didn't like
The father his spoilt boy would harshly
strike—

One often heard him screaming, and I felt
I wished the *father* such hard blows was
dealt!

Indeed I was so angry I would fly,
And hide, whene'er *that* "*gentleman*"
passed by!

OUR LITTLE BIRTHDAY PARTIES!

THOSE little Birthday Parties—long ago!
They really often made a pretty show!
Each of us "held his own," and as the
day

Drew near would save up quite a little
store

Of sweetmeats, fruits and nuts—a poor
display,

Our greedy elders might have said, of
cheer!

Not so said we; it was to us a day
Looked forward to a good bit of the year!

We all contributed—though it might be

A trifle only, it would *help*—at least!

So here a bag of walnuts, you would see,

And here were apples to make bright
the feast—

(Red-ripes and harvest apples, fair of
skin,

Always attention from our eyes would win).

Then pears or cherries, grapes of purple
glow,

For as our birthdays different were, you
know,

The feasts were often of a *different kind*!

The harvest-apple, with its pretty rind,
Gave way to oranges, and these would
serve

Instead of pears, and many a preserve
We had, and cakes the maker had made
nice

With almonds, citron, lemon-peel, and
spice!

Then we told stories, ere we said "Good-
night,"

Such as would give to each of us a
fright!

The story of a lost child, and the like,
Always most keenly on small minds would
strike!

Then, with the eyes as tired as the head—
We lit our candles and—*went off to bed*!

That is the end of most things of this
kind,

As, on inquiry, you will surely find.

OUR LITTLE BIRTHDAY FEAST!

EACH of us held his or her own birthday

By bringing out the *sweetest* little store
Of nuts, preserves, or fruits!—'twas a
display

Prepared for long—and therefore prized
the more!

For it could come to us but once a year,
And each year *should* improve upon the
last!

Therefore all looked for ever better cheer,
As anxious eyes upon the *spread* they
cast!

Yes! all brought contributions, don't you
see,

To help a brother's, or a sister's feast!

If but a bag of walnuts it might be
It was a deed of kindness at least!

All was arranged in our own special set
Of china, handled with a careful hand!
(I wonder if aught is remaining yet,
Or all gone off into a Better Land?)

We sat up late such nights—as if grown
old
All of a sudden!—and as time slipped
by
Many a little nursery tale we told,
Until *some* went to *sleep*—"upon the
sly!"

Then, not too soon, we saw that it was
late,
And each would carry off one well-filled
plate
Of sweets — then on the pillow of his
bed
Lay down a tired, but a contented
head!

OF SOME OF OUR "OUT-OF-DOORS" AMUSEMENTS.

You want to hear, you say, what long
ago,
My out-of-door amusements usually were;
O! just so varied I could *not*, you know,
Describe them, *every one*, nor might
you care
To hear too long a list, but I can tell
Of some that also *you* might have liked
well.

Walking on stilts was one! * I could run
races
Upon them — but what better was, *I*
thought,
By means of these one walked through
miry places,
And never to disgrace by *mud* was
brought—
Unless by ill-luck you might chance to
fall,
As I did once—myself, the stilts and all!

Then "hop-scotch" we delighted in—and
racing!—

Sweet cakes and plums and "bull's
eyes,"† and what not
Upon a tall stool at a distance placing,
Then trying who could soonest reach the
spot
And seize the spoil! — and sometimes
tumbling down
Upon the way, like Jack who "broke his
crown!"‡

And so, no doubt, had been *our* luck, but
we
Raced on a grass-plot, smooth as smooth
could be!
And then we nets made for our cherry
trees,
Or for the fruit-trees on the wall, and
oh!
Much we liked gathering and shelling peas,
Or picking currants to make jam—and
so
Our out-door labours were of many kinds,
And often just the sort to suit our minds!

HOW I EARNED MY WAGES!

I *EARNED* them just as *others* wages earn!
They were not given me for nothing—
No!—

'Twas a good lesson that I had to learn,
Nor was I, as I think, in learning slow!

The lesson—who would money have, for
pleasure,
Should work for it!—he will enjoy it
then!
One should not have too much of idle
leisure,
Even if we're little women, or small
men!

I'd read of Frank and his laburnum
seeds,||
And often, as I toiled, I thought of
him!
And worked the harder while uprooting
weeds,
And filling a big measure to the brim!

* See "A Madcap Grandmama." Page 791.

† Old-fashioned "suckers."

‡ "Jack fell down and broke his crown, And Jill came tumbling after."—Old Nursery Song.

|| See Edgeworth's "Early Lessons."

Twopence an hour, I *think*, my "wages" were!

But there was other work that brought me more
Of money and with much, *much* less of care—

Gathering dry pine cones for our winter store!*

For, in the many fir-groves that were near
Our garden, at the right time of the year,
When rude and blustering winds went
roaring round,

We gathered cones by thousands from the
ground!

Yes!—*didn't* those winds *go round*, with
howl and shriek,

So you couldn't hear your nearest neighbour speak!

And as they shook the firs, both short *and*
tall,

Down—patter! patter! would their dry
cones fall!

And twopence every bushel was the price
I got—and I can tell you this *was* nice!
For 'twas not hard to earn, and I could
buy

Small things oft looked at with a longing
eye!

And what were these, you ask, my children?—Well!

I have not time, just now, *all that* to
tell!!

OF OUR "NUTTING DAYS!"

THEN—"Nutting days"—how very fair
they seem,

When one looks back on them as on a
dream,

Bent on remembering but its prettier
views!

Think of the woods—the nuts—the autumn
hues!

Think of the squirrel on the old oak tree,
Dropping the acorn husks, with gentle
bustle!

Think how the small thing used to peep
at thee,
When first it heard a footstep's slightest
rattle!

Think of the clustering nut-branches!—one
shake

And numbers of small *fruit* came
tumbling down,

As many as you could, you then would
take—

Choosing the largest, ripest, and *most*
brown.

But look at yon queer object — what is
that,

With such a black and pointed little
nose?

It moves like neither weasel, dog, nor cat,
And pricks, if touched, or angry made
by blows!

'Tis just a hedgehog! — and is nothing
more!

I've often found them in the woods before.
But come along—this is the place for

dew-berries,

And one thing's sure—you can't say there
are *few* berries!

How nice they look—like purple grapes, I
think,

And one need not from them when ripened
shrink,

For fear lest in each tiny, shining cluster
Of fruit a very swarm of maggots muster!

So that in eating these, as a young brother
Of mine would say, you eat both meat
and fruit,

Half of the one thing and half of the other,
But maggots never seemed *my* taste to
suit!

Still—should *you* like the mixture, all is
well!

That one part's white, one black, one
scarce can tell—

Or if the "cake's" not *your* sort, as you
cry,

Well! *then* I wouldn't, I think, the dainty
try!

* When old and dry these made excellent fires.

And sometimes one would find a little tree
That tempted very much one's eyes—at
least!
Such small bright apples* on each branch
you'd see,
You felt to taste them *could* but prove
a feast!

Yet O! how you would then screw up
your face,
Until were nose and mouth quite out of
place,
All *twisted*!—and so *very* pretty made
That even to look at you one felt afraid,
Lest one should be so rude as laugh out-
right—
And *that*, all know, would hardly be
polite!

OF AN OLD FLOWER AND FRUIT GARDEN.

THERE was a garden where I once had
been,
In those "old days" my dears, when I
was young;
'Twas very large and shut in by a screen
Of mighty elm trees, whose great
branches swung,
Full of the rooks' nests, "up against the
sky,"
Knocking each other, when the winds
were high!

O! never garden fuller was of roses—
And you could "make up" there, a hun-
dred posies
Of dear, old-fashioned flowers — here's
Pheasant's Eye;
Here's "Love lies bleeding"—*such* a
curious flower;
Here's "Persian Iris," blue as summer's
sky,
And Scarlet Lychnis — growing up to
tower
Above the others; Solomon's Seal—heart's-
ease—
O! no *end* of "old" flowers, besides just
these!
Not to speak of the water-lilies, spread
O'er the dark surface of a small, deep
lake.

And each one resting its sweet, snowy
head
Upon a leaf, over, *perhaps*, a snake!
For it was long—yes! *very* long indeed,
Since that deep water had been cleared
of weed!

Then the fruit garden, with the grey,
brick wall
Around it—'twas a place you well might
call
Delightful!—full of nice, "old-fashioned"
fruit,
Enough no *end* of tastes, I think, to suit!
Peaches and nectarines — plums of all
kinds,
Apples of *gold*! — and others of pink
rinds—
Pears of strange names—and the old mul-
berry tree—
The quince and medlar—(never fruits for
me!—)
Pistachio nuts — the chestnut, walnut,
cobb—
A garden any one might like to rob!

Then there was an old labyrinth—a place
Where you might almost lose yourself
for hours;
'Twas not a walk where you might run a
race!
And quite as curious were its many
bowers,
Made of such clipped, such close and
gloomy yew,
The very brightest sun could ne'er peep
through!

A mighty vine ran right across one
wing
Of the great house—a wonderful old thing!
They *said* five hundred years old, you must
know—
But then that *might* be "drawing a long
bow!"
Still, it of fruit had an abundant store,
And bunches of black grapes by hundreds
bore.

And then there was a fine old filbert
grove—
O! *all* seemed there, indeed, that you
would love

* Crab apples.

To have in your own place, of flower and fruit,
 Such as the very *greediest* taste might suit!
 As to the house itself, indeed I fear
 'Twas far too grand to well describe it here—
 Only its staircase was so wide, *they say*
 A madman drove his carriage up one day!
 But I don't think 'twas true!—and now,
 lest I
 Should tire you, dears, Good-night — but
 not Good-bye!*

GRANDMAMA'S EARLY PONY- RIDES!

Now my papa was what, you know, they
 call
 Lord of the Manor—now and then I'd
 go
 With him on "pony-back," † not over wall
 Or ditch—but at a steady pace and slow,
 O'er his broad lands in pleasant, summer
 days;
 Now 'twas through fields, now through
 a shady lane,
 Now winding through full many woodland
 ways,
 Talking *and* trotting — and then home
 again!

Sometimes to see *my* grandpapa I went—
 And while he and "papa" would talking
 sit,
 Into a pretty garden I was sent
 To wait, nor did I mind it, dears, *one
 bit!*
 For there was fruit around, and I was told
 That *I might pick some*—there was
 purple plum,
 And apples with a rind that shone like
 gold! ‡
 And I assure you—dears—I *did* "*pick
 some!*"
 Then we would ride back over Deadman's
 Hill—§
 And reach home just in time for early
 tea;
 And *didn't I go in* for it, with a will!"
 Ah! happy days, if few, were those, to me!

A LEAFY BOWER!

Oh! the house in the tree—
 The house in the chestnut tree!
 With the boards nailed up for steps from
 bough to bough;
 As I look back on the days so long
 gone by,
 The days of my girlhood, I can see it now—
 With a passing smile, or even a little sigh!

Oh! the house in the tree,
 The wooden house in the tree!
 Where I brought my lunch, and where I
 sat and read!
 With the green leaves rustling round,
 With a gentle, peaceful sound,
 And the song of the little birds above my
 head!

Oh! the house in the tree—
 The snug little house in the tree!
 From which I could see the garden, and
 the mill
 Beyond—and the fields so green,
 Where the cattle might be seen—
 Oh! the wood and the pond and the
 rippling little rill!
 Aye! aye! the house in the tree—
 What a bower was that for me! ||

OF A LITTLE GIRL'S FIRST VISIT FROM HOME.

O! THERE came a kindly lady one fine
 day—
 At the "Manor House" for a little while
 to stay;
 And she used to vow that whoever seemed
 to shirk
 Their duties, it was not I who "left my
 work!"
 And she told how the elder sisters of the
 house
 Amused themselves, with their rides,
 lessons, or play,
 While *I* was kept in even as a little mouse,
 To do *their* duties the while they were
 away!

* The same place is described in Vol. ii. of "Dark Pages," under name of Brentfield House.

† Poor old Fanny!—she was safe, if deliberate in her "footsteps."

‡ This apple was called in Herts "golden rod," or the "golden pippin."

§ The real name of a hill near Sandon, in Herts.

|| The same little paradise is referred to in "I do remember well a wooden house," see p. 126.

And so to give me, as she declared, a
"change,"

This lady asked my mother to spare
me, just

A little while, and my mother thought it
strange

To ask *me*, yet avowed that she "felt
she must!"

She didn't know *how* to "spare me," so
she said,

For I was the "little nursery maid,"
you see—

And the youngest always slept in mine own
bed,

But still—"it was right that spared I
now should be!"

In truth was my mother anxious I should go
Away for a while, again said 'twas but
right—

That she'd do the best she could without
me—so

I went upon my short holiday with
delight!

And I had—remembered still—a happy
rest,

When a peaceful sunshine filled a little
breast!

MUSING ON REMEMBRANCES OF THE FARTHER PAST.—I.

My little ones—what tales have I not
told you?

How I have searched small annals of
the past!

By what small threads of wisdom sought
to hold you,

Keeping your young, yet shrewd atten-
tion fast;

Even so a little brother's did I keep
In past times, until small eyes closed in
sleep.

Yes! 'twas a practice in quite early years
To watch beside a little bed and seek
To dry the often hot, rebellious tears

That *would*—resentfully—roll down the
cheek

In keen, if childish anger—be it said—
At being "sent off by mama" to bed!

And still would I rejoice, if my small
rhymes

And tales could soothe a fretting one to
rest—

When it complained that yet were "early
times,"

And to obey troubled the tiny breast,
Until our songs from sorrow would be-
guile,

And the tear changed into the drowsy
smile.

MUSING ON REMEMBRANCES OF THE NEARER PAST.—II.

ABOUT LITTLE MARY. I.

IN THE MORNING.

O! MAMA was tired when you pulled at
her curls*

To hint to her it was time she opened
her eyes!

For you were the liveliest of all little
girls,

And you thought yourself, at that age,
wondrous wise!

Then you pulled the bed-clothes with your
tiny hand,

Or shook the curtains to make the brass
rings clatter;

And thought you had *quite* done something
that was grand

If Mama sprang up and cried — "O!
what's the matter?"

For you didn't know, as you sang your
little song,

Like a bird that's just awakened in its
nest,

That Mama had sat up late—had sat up
long

After the world outside seemed all at
rest—†

For she *loved* to help Papa to copy *this* note
Or *that*, from a book, to help him with
his work;

Then a letter to save his pen not seldom
wrote,

While *you* were asleep, you lively little
"Turk!"

* NOTE.—Our children, in turns, all slept in our own room, in a small bed, until old enough or strong enough, to be trusted to other hands than the parents.

† Often until one or two o'clock in the morning. (See p. 18.)

So Mama *did* wish that you'd go to sleep
again,
But Mama would beg her little one in
vain;
For she often did her best, but still *must*
keep
An eye on Mama, to see if she *were*
asleep!
With one ear awake, to hear the housemaid
come
To the door with water hot—and knock
“tum-tum!”

But would sing them when at “work”
and when at play,
Through the many happy hours of her
small day.

“O! Ma-wy! Ma-wy,
All contwa-wy,
How's your garden gwow!
Wid silber bells,
And tockle shells,
And king-tups all in a wow!”

MUSING ON REMEMBRANCES OF THE NEARER PAST.—III.

ABOUT LITTLE MARY. II.

AT NIGHT.

AND, oh! what a number of songs Mama
would sing
At night, ere the sparkling little eyes
would close!
For you were, we have said, a lively
little thing,
And to go to bed was quite one of your
woes!
Now 'twas some little tale of a poor
mouse,
Or of a bird—that “sent you off,” at
last—
Or of the old dame and her tiny house—
Or of the weasel that would *not* sleep
fast!

Or—“Mary! Mary!
All Contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With silver bells,
And cockle shells
And king-cups all in a row!”

And when I couldn't remember more to
say
One was really forced to *invent*, upon the
way!
But it was “all fish” that came into
your net,
Nor the songs in the day-time would my
child forget—

THE ANT-LION AND THE SPIDER.

O! DID you ever about the ant-lion hear?
'Tis cruel to the ants as a lion to man, I
fear;
He hides in a pit that he himself has
made,
'Tis a pit to catch the careless and the
small,
When they to explore his neighbourhood
are betrayed,
And into the trap are but too apt to fall!
And when this happens on some unlucky
day
The ant-lion rushes out on his frightened
prey,
And makes “short work” of him, or so
I have read—
For he eats, they say, the legs and then
the head;
But I don't know which the *tenderest* parts
may be,
'Tis a secret that *it* never told to *me*!

But hardly as brutally his work he does,
I *hope*, as the spider of the goggle eyes
And many legs, who when he may hear
the *buzz*
Of the frightened and, alas! entangled
flies
That his net has caught, comes out, I've
understood,
Not at once to *kill* them—but to *suck their*
blood!

And I've sometimes stuffed my ears, to
hide the “scream”
Of an insect that would almost human
seem,

That a cruel spider was *so* slowly killing;
 And—as I most indignantly would cry,
 His own fat, ugly bloated body filling
 With the warm life-blood of a harmless
 fly!

THE THIEVISH JACKDAW.

There is, all through the winter months, a tray placed upon the broad sill of a breakfast-room window at Streat Place, on which bread, and especially the cold, cooked white beef fat or suet that they delight in, is placed for the numbers of little titmice, robins and chaffinches that abound in the neighbouring woods and gardens. While at lunch to-day (March 18th, 1888), within a few feet of this window, the glass was suddenly darkened by the outspread black wings of a jackdaw, who, scattering the little birds then having their dinner off the usual lump of fat, seized upon it and flew off. This reminded us that when, some time ago, we kept a flock of fancy pigeons, the jackdaws often watched the doors of their holes, for the not uncommon chance of an egg rolling partly out, when one of them would stick the point of his bill right through the shell and fly off with it.

ROBBING before our eyes, you greedy thing!—

You with the strong beak and the raven wing;

O! you most wicked, *wicked* thief, how dare

You steal from these nice little ones!—
 Take care!

For you *might* come too often some fine day

And so be seized ere you could fly away!

For there come times, you know, in which
 a thief

May be by some means or another caught!

Watch, or you'll—as *some* term it—"come to grief,"

And just too late, it may be, will be taught

That man or bird, who *will* do wicked things,

Shall be caught surely, by arms, legs, or wings!

A TOWN IN THE WOOD.

WE came across a busy scene one day—*
 Thousands of ants crossing a forest way!

O'er one especial track they went, and oh!

You *should* have seen the "timber"
 some of them

Were dragging sturdily—and never slow
 Of march were they, though big, as
 were a stem

Of tree to us, the sticks they dragged
 along—

'Twas strange to see such little things so
 strong!

Following them in amongst the trees we
 found

A great heap of these sticks—some feet
 around,

And o'er a foot high, swarming with a
 crowd

Of busy workers—not a sound was heard!
 They had no voices, either small or loud,

For—unlike the ass, the bee, the bird,
 But like the fish—all worked in silence—
 still

They worked by rule and all worked with
 a will!

'Twas a strange thing, we thought, to see
 the order

And quickness of their movements—
 when they found

They couldn't pull a "pine needle" o'er
 some border,

Or ridge of earth, they turned and
 went around,

Sometimes a long way, for a newer road—
 But always found their way to bring their
 load

And lay it on the "new town"—Yes!—to
 see

Such little beings so busy and so clever
 Is not a thing, dears, to forgotten be—

But — rather to remember it — "for
 ever"!!

QUEER SORTS OF MAMAS!

OH! there are curious mothers!—In the
 sands,

Of Africa's far-off and broiling lands,
 The ostrich lays its eggs—just covered o'er,
 That passers by may find them not—no
 more—

* In one of the pine woods near Bournemouth.

Then far away will this strange parent go—
And if she e'er comes back none seem to
know! *

They say *not*—for so burning is the air,
So ovenlike, the birds require no care
In hatching—each at once is known to

TUN

Out of its shell into the burning sun,
To see if they can pick up, here and there,
Something to suit for new-born babies'
fare!

And then the cuckoo, as we've said, will
leave

Its egg in a hedgesparrow's nest "for
good"!—

About its fate it never seems to grieve,
Though it is hatched with quite a
stranger brood;

But "cookoo's—cookoo's," and then flies
away—†

Nor comes again until next spring, they
say!

Funny mamas are such!—and one knows
well

What different sorts of stories, if one
pleased,

Concerning other mothers one could tell—
I've known birds rather by the hand be
seized,

Than let boys take their eggs out of their
nest—

And *that's* the sort of mother I like best!

SONGS FOR QUITE LITTLE ONES.

THE ADVENTURES OF A LITTLE GOAT—

AND WHAT HE LEARNT!

THERE was once a little goat,
And he had so warm a coat
That he resolved to go
Where the mountain breezes blow,
And so he ran away
Upon the hills to play!

But he soon came back again
To his friends upon the plain—
"Up there," he cried, "I found
Only grass upon the ground,
All as dry as it could be—
And that wouldn't do for *me*.

"*Besides—it wasn't wise
Such a home as mine to leave,
And to go up to the skies,
And so make my parents grieve!*"
I think he should have thought
Of his parents *first*—but then
You see he was untaught,
Not like little boys—or men!

OUR TOMMY!

OUR Tommy—aged six—was everybody's
pet—

And yet he was not spoiled, and you never
heard him fret—

He always did what he was told and *that*,
as we know well,

Is not the sort of tale of boys that *every*
one can tell!

He was *so* nice and gentle to everything
he had—

Ah! Tommy was my favourite—a *darling*
little lad!

And oh! he was so quiet when the baby
was in bed,

Though he *could* be noisy at all proper
times, his nurses said!

If every boy was only like our Tommy,
don't you see,

What a very quiet, happy world this world
of ours would be!

Aye! for each parent likes to think *his*
child is good alone—

That *really*, save for his "own Tommy,"
good boys would be unknown!

WHEN I KNEW BOBBY FIRST—

AND WHEN I KNEW BOBBY LAST!

WHEN I knew Bobby, *first*,
He would scream about all day
But that was not the worst,
I am sorry I must say!

* Romanes, however, has lately stated that the ostrich *does* return to its nest.

† See "About Bird Music, generally!" (Page 781.)

For he broke his sister's doll and his
 little brother's chair!
 Yet when I saw him *last* he was taking
 every care
 Of some pretty little toys he was anxious
 not to break,
 But to keep them to please baby, when
 baby was awake!—

For he always had to play
 Where baby slept, they say;
 But he learnt to be so good—
 I have always understood,
 Not through any sort of scolding, let it
 ever be so strong—
 No! by gentle words and mild
 They taught the little child
 How *very* sad that boy must be who only
 can do wrong!

A NICE LITTLE BOY!

OH! the dainty little lad!
 If no gloves or shoes he had,
 And if upon his curly head he had no cap
 nor hat—
 Yet you rarely saw a speck
 Of dust on face or neck,
 And you felt that he was nice if it only
 was for *that*!

O! he did the best he could
 With the clothes that ne'er were
 good—
 Just a *smock*—one of the coarsest make,
 but *clean*—
 His trousers—all so mended,
 From the cold winds scarce
 defended—
 Yet no stain or mud upon them could be
 seen!
 No! no!
 No stain or mud upon *him* could be seen!

NOT A NICE LITTLE BOY!

BUT another boy I knew,
 Drest in velvet coat of blue—
 Always by the servants spoiled and always
 petted by his mother!
 Yet he had so rough a head,
 And his eyes were always red,
 By crying for some foolish thing, or
 other.

And you but rarely pleased him,
 However much, however long you tried;
 He said, indeed, you teased him
 Unless you gave him all for which he
 cried!

And that would sometimes be
 Just the *wildest* thing you see—
 The top brick of the chimney, or a slice
 out of the moon!

And though he dressed so smartly
 Few *cared* for him—and partly
 Because they could not satisfy him—morn-
 ing, night, or noon!

Just so!
 Because nothing ever satisfied him—morn-
 ing, night or noon!

THE RIGHT SORT OF BOY!

AND there was another lad—
 Pretty clothes *he*, also, had,
 Yet he was not like some vain boys that
 I knew;
 He would rather far, I'm sure,
 Have given them to the poor,
 But his mother did not wish him to do
 so—
 Oh! *no*—
 His mother did not *wish* him to do so!

But what he *had* to give
 He gave them—people said;
 When he was told that they were forced
 to live
 In *such* poor homes! with never a soft
 bed!
 O! he had a gentle heart!
 And took every poor boy's part,
 And all his friends were fond of him—
 and in all hours of leisure
 They asked to have this little lad and loved
 to give him pleasure!

THE FOOLISH LITTLE BIRD.

THERE was once a little bird
 Whose song was only heard
 When the sun was shining brightly on its
 cage;
 And when the sun went in
 It would make itself quite thin
 By pecking at its prison in a rage!

So a hole it made at last!
 And an evil pussy cast
 Her eyes upon that hole—O! a pussy's
 heart is bad!
 Yes! that fatal hole she saw—
 And at *once* in went her paw—
 But—I cannot tell the rest—dears! the
 story is *too* sad!

THE LITTLE BOY AND THE RAINY DAY.

THE grass was dead and the earth was
 brown,
 And the thirsty roses hung their heads—
 Till the soft warm rain came gently down,
 And the flowers woke up in their dusty
 beds.

And the heartsease blue and the lily bell
 Drank up the rain drops as they fell;
 And they drooped no more in the burning
 heat,
 And the leaves grew bright and the leaves
 grew sweet.

Yet a little boy I once heard say—
 "How I hate a dull, or a rainy day!"—
 Till he went to look at his own pet flowers,
 And saw them washed by the falling
 showers!

Then his face grew bright, and he under-
 stood
 That the clouds and the mists were sent
 for good—
 That the flowers would shrivel up and dry
 If the rain fell not from the summer sky!

ANOTHER LITTLE BOY AND A RAINY DAY.

ANOTHER child I once heard say,
 "I cannot *bear* a rainy day!
 I hate these tiresome summer showers!"—
 "Ah! Tommy—come and see the flowers!"

"But yesterday they all seemed dead—
 See now how each one lifts its head,
 The rose, the pink—the lily—all
 To drink the rain drops as they fall!"

"No pretty plants had bloomed again
 Except for that sweet fall of rain;
 For many things bring good or joy,
 Though not perceived at first, my boy!"

NAUGHTY BOYS.

I SAW some naughty boys, one day,
 At *such* a cruel game of play—
 For they had tied poor pussy's tail
 Quite tightly to an iron pail!
 In vain she scratched and screamed and
 bit—
 Too surely had they fastened it!
 And next she ran away so fast
 They lost all sight of her, at last!
 Then by a pond she stopped and soon be-
 thought her
 That she had better jump into the water!

Just then a little boy came by,
 Who looked at her with pitying eye,
 And said—"What naughty, *naughty* boys!
 I *wondered* what was all that noise!
 'Twas cruel, *indeed*, to treat a cat
 In such a shameful way as *that*!"
 So he, at *once* untied the pail—
 And softly smoothed her ruffled tail,
 And coaxed her gently on—to come
 And keep him company at home!

Now in that home were *many* mice—
 And all that was most sweet and nice,
 When everybody was in bed,
 These little mice devoured, 'twas said!
 But after *pussy* came, no mouse
 Dared show within the place its nose!
 O! pussy kept *so* sweet the house,
 They said it might have been a rose!
 She purred by night—she purred by day—
 But never, *never* purred and *went away*!

THE GREEDY OLD SOW!

THERE was once a fat old sow—
 And I cannot tell you how,
 But she got into a bed where the carrots
 thickly grew—
 Then they searched that carrot bed,
 And the thief away they led!
 "Now we'll make you, greedy creature"—
 they declared—"into a stew!"

For the sow ne'er understood
 What she thought would do her
 good
 And make her fat—(if nothing's said about
 it's being *sweet!*)
 Was the cause—no other!—why
 The butcher took her from her sty,
 Or rather from the carrot-bed!—and made
 her into meat!

THE RASH LITTLE BOY.

ONCE on a time a little lad
 Thought that so wise a head he had
 That it were well that all should see
 How very clever he could be!
 They told him of our sailors' graves—
 They told him stories of the waves—
 "You cowards!" so *indeed* he said!
 "I wouldn't be like you—not I!—
 When each of you is safe a-bed,
 I'll sail beneath the moonlit sky!"

They thought 'twas only said in joke,
 Nor knew he *meant* the words he spoke;
 So that he went afloat one night!
 'Tis true the moon was shining bright,
 But winds arose, and on the shore
 They heard the billows' angry roar;
 It tossed his little boat about,
 So it went drifting—drifting out,
 And soon was seen no more!—poor little
 Jack
 Had dared too much, and never more
 came back.

SAM—THE CONTENTED LITTLE BOY.

AND there was yet a little boy
 Who much delighted in a toy,
 Which he *thought* was as good as a gun!
 gun! gun!
 So he put in it a pea,
 And he fired it up a tree,
 And said—"What a clever thing I've
 done! done! done!"

For a gun it *seemed* to be,
 Though it wasn't one to me!
 For it couldn't make a "hole," and it
 didn't make a noise!

But to Sam it seemed as good,
 For he fully understood
Real guns are not proper things for boys!
 boys! boys!

O! it is well to be
 So contented, don't you see—
 And to play with things belonging to your
 age!
 For when you older grow
 You'll have other things, you know,
 And wisely then turn over a "new page!
 page! page!"

A DEAR LITTLE GIRL!

OH! once a knew a little girl,
 Whose pretty hair would *sweetly* curl,
 Whose eyes were summer-blue and bright,
 Whose tiny step was always light!

A little girl who did not cry,
 But worked beneath the sunny sky,
 To plant—and sow her early seeds,
 And pull up all the grass and weeds—

She said she liked both work and play,
 And not to *idle* through the day!
 And so she dug a path all round
 Her little bit of garden ground.

She was not one to cry for toys—
 Like *some* we know!—of girls *and* boys!
 But all day long our little Lizzie
 Was full of song, yet always busy!

ANOTHER DEAR LITTLE GIRL.

ANOTHER little girl I knew
 With hair so curly—eyes so blue!
 But, what was better far than all,
 She always was so kind and nice
 To little things that fly or crawl!
 If butterflies or tiny mice,
 Or wrens upon a hawthorn tree,
 She would not hurt them—no! not she!

THE LAZY LITTLE BOY.

THERE was a lazy little boy
 Who cared for nothing but a toy;
 He said he wouldn't learn to read—
 He *was* a stupid boy, indeed!

When evening came his brothers said—
 "He can't sit up with us, you know—
 O! send that idle boy to bed,
 He is so *very* dull and slow.

"We've got some books to read—and he
 Would either cry for us to play,
 Or snoring on his chair would be—
 Go, send him off to bed!" said they.

A GOOD SCOLDING!

THERE was once a little cat—
 And she grew so *very* fat
 That she could not even catch a baby
 mouse!
 So her mother said—"You pig!
 You're so lazy and so big,
 You *shall* no longer dwell within my
 house!"

Pussy went to work at once!
 For she wouldn't be thought a
 dunce!
 Nor yet a little pig—she *despised* "their
 idle ways,"
 Then she caught so many mice—
 (For she found them quite too nice!)
 That she never more had anything but
 praise!

Oh, no!
 She never needed anything but praise!

AGAIN—SOME FOOLISH LITTLE BOYS.

"OH! little Tom—your lessons leave,
 Let's sail our ships this summer eve;
 See!—there is Philip's biggest boat,
 We'll take that, too, and set afloat—
 O! it will be such *jolly* fun—
 We'll play till setting of the sun!"

But ah! the sun went down so fast!
 They all grew wet and cold, at last,
 And then some kindly sailors brought them
 home,
 And asked the doctor to make haste and
 come;
 And oh! the doctor found them both so ill!
 He had to physic them and keep them
 still!

When once again they went about,
 They took care *never* to go out
 And slip into the water any more!
 So soon became as merry as before.
 For it's sad for little boys
 When they cannot make a noise,
 Or jump about and race about and play!
 No! one likes to see them run,
 Full of merriment and fun,
 Like the puppy dogs, who gambol all the
 day!
 But they mustn't into mischief get—and
 then,
They'll grow up into wise and useful men!

HOW LITTLE BILLY LEARNED TO BE QUIET!

ONCE I met a little boy
 Who never had a toy,
 Or a present, but he broke it, then threw
 it quite away!
 Until at last his mother
 Said he should not have another
 Unless he learned to be a little careful in
 his play!

He only kicked, at *first*!
 But that was not the worst,
 For he soon awoke the baby with his
 screaming and his cries;
 Yet when I last went there,
 He was taking so much care
 Of a pretty little horse that they had given
 him as a prize!

Oh! now he was so quiet when the baby
 was in bed—
 Though he knew how to be merry at all
 proper times, 'twas said—
 And would run about and play about, and
 laugh and shout and sing,
 For well at last had Billy learnt that *there's*
a time for everything.

THE SILLY LITTLE MAN.

I HEARD a little man say—(*such* a silly
 man!)
 "They say I cannot ride—sir! but I am
 sure I *can*!"
 So he got upon a horse—
 And it threw him off—of *course*!

And it threw him on the road, right *bang*
upon his head!
"What a silly little man you must surely
be!" I said.

"Don't you know whate'er you do you
should do the proper way—
Whatever it may be, if it's riding—work—
or play;
Have you *never* learned to sing
That *proper* little song—
There's a "right" to everything—
And as certainly a "wrong"!"

But, perhaps, I ought to say
That I *didn't* speak in this way
Until I saw he wasn't hurt the *least*—
And also that he did not *flog his beast*!
For this he did not do, at any rate
While I stood watching, near the stable
gate,
But hung his head as on his way he went,
A wiser man, I think, for the event!

THE UNSELFISH LITTLE CHILD.

A CHILD once sat upon a bank, a bank
warmed by the morning sun,
And tightly in her hand she held a newly
made, nice currant bun,
A child that was not very tall, and not
much higher than my knee—
But yet she had the kindest heart, as I
shall hope to make you see!

For as she ate her nice new cake, another
little child came by,
With such a sadly weary footstep, and oh!
such a tear-stained eye!
And then she gently said to him—"Poor
little fellow! you must take
And eat what nurse has given me, for I
can't *bear* to keep this cake!

"For oh! you look so hungry, and I fear
that you have had no meat,
And even may have had no *pudding*! for
a long, long time to eat!

O! take it, little one, oh! take it for your
very own—for me
I've had a hearty dinner, so I don't mind
waiting for my tea!"

The hungry little one began to smile and
well indeed he might,
And then he dried his falling tears, and
once again his eyes looked bright;
'Twas true he'd nothing had to eat the
whole length of that summer day!—
O! then our little girl was happy and went
singing on her way!

THE REST OF NIGHT.

MAMA TO HER DARLING!

"SLEEP well on thy pillow, my dear little
one,
For the toil and the cares of the day are
done;
And the beautiful sun, so warm and
bright,
Has left us now—to the rest of night!
"O! sleep on thy pillow until—as before,
The beautiful sun is up once more!
And the moon and the stars all pass
away,
And we waken up to another day!

"All the cows and calves and the little
sheep,
And the birds in their nests are fast
asleep,
And the lilies, too, and their sister flowers,
Are safe and snug in their leafy bowers.

"And the good God, watching over all,
Will surely watch o'er my little one;
And so let the curtains gently fall
Till the light peeps in of the morning
sun."

THE END.

Extracts from a Letter from one of MRS. DOBELL'S OLDEST
LADY FRIENDS.



"As one of the Authoress's oldest friends, I have been privileged to glance through an early copy of this work; and notwithstanding the graphic biographical 'Sketch' (with which I warmly agree), I have been impressed by the feeling that a *stranger* or *casual reader* of these Poems might easily be led to form a quite mistaken idea of the Authoress's mental attitude in daily life. The number of pathetic verses on the gloomy, melancholy, and evil aspects of the world might naturally lead to the impression that this was the habitual attitude of the writer's mind, unless the reader was aware that her appreciation of joy and of all innocent, high and intellectual pleasures, was as *vivid* as her sense of sorrow, injustice and hypocrisy was intense. . . . Her power of rapidly turning from one to the other was surprising. . . . Her intimate friends never doubted that, except when oppressed by long and serious illness or by poignant grief at the sufferings or death of those she loved, her daily life was *markedly cheerful and happy* She had an inexhaustible fund of fun and humour. *Punch* was a great favourite. . . . Until she lost her lovely voice, music, and especially singing, never failed to carry her into the regions of ecstasy; and there can be no doubt that from girlhood to advanced years the composition of her poems was a source of exquisite pleasure. . . . A feature which I do not see mentioned in the 'Life Sketch' was her absolute freedom from any fear of death, which, although she had been present and had assisted at several distressing death-beds, was quite phenomenal. This was touchingly expressed in the lines she wrote to her husband in one of her illnesses when she had abandoned all hope of recovery :

Think of me, dearest, through the coming years,
As one at peace at last—at last at rest.

And the same idea is expressed again and again in other verses, of which there are many. . . . I should like to illustrate what I have said as to the cheerful happiness of her daily life and her *vivid appreciation of joy*, by reference to the following among many others of her poems. . . . With regard to 'Fun and Humour,' it is only necessary to refer to such verses as 'A Warning,' p. 653; 'John Jones His Speech,' p. 742, and all the 'Songs

and Tales for Children.' . . . As to singing, I would refer to p. 721, 'A Pleasant Recollection,' ending with the words :

It is beyond the simple gift of tongue,
 Something seems in it even of Divine ;
 I have looked into Heaven as I have sung
 And thought I saw there Angels' faces shine.

Also 'Strangely Bright' on the same page. . . . For the rest, I must only give the TITLES of a few that have especially attracted my attention, as follows : 'I have had greater joy than words can tell,' p. 583 ; 'Love, love,' p. 568 ; 'A poet's thanks to Heaven,' p. 509 ; 'Aye, sent from Heaven,' p. 581 ; 'Rebuke to a mourner,' pp. 553 and 574 ; 'I have awakened,' p. 557 ; 'Looking into Heaven,' p. 588 ; 'Some philosophic advice,' p. 536 ; 'Love, love,' p. 433 ; 'Contrasts,' p. 448 ; 'Yet repine not,' p. 481 ; 'Love the greater,' p. 478 ; 'I live them o'er again,' p. 466 ; 'Still under the stars,' p. 451 ; 'I knew not,' p. 473 ; 'Yet have I had so much of joy,' p. 688 ; 'Love the Conqueror,' p. 753 ; 'No, I repine not,' p. 633 ; 'Thankfulness,' p. 724. I could refer to many others, but these are sufficient to confirm what I have said. . . . While writing the above I see, in to-day's *Times*, the Obituary of Lady Anthony de Rothschild, some passages of which are so singularly appropriate to the life of Mrs. Dobell, that I am tempted to quote them. (Mrs. Dobell was Conservative in politics.) . . . She was not in the least degree old fashioned. She was wholly free from social prejudice and had an open mind for new views and customs. She had always been an insatiable reader, and, as the principal languages of the Continent were familiar to her, her range in literature was very wide ; her conversation was, like her person, exquisitely gentle and refined, but she had a keen eye for absurdities and comicalities, and in matters of serious importance her conclusions were clear and resolute ; she was gentle in speech and firm in action. . . . It was obvious to all who had advantage of intimate conversation with her that none of her opinions were taken at second hand, but all rested on a strong foundation of careful study and clear thought. . . . Evil speaking, lying and slandering, vulgar gossip and malicious tittle-tattle could not live in her presence. She enthroned in the shrine of her inmost heart the highest ideal of life and duty, and that ideal seemed, insensibly, to purify the surrounding air and elevate the world in which she lived.' . . ."

September 23rd, 1910.

